Oxfordshire Guardian

Didcot, Wallingford, Thame & Henley-on-Thames

Weekly leisure guide for in and around Oxford

Thursday, February 15 - Wednesday, February 21, 2018 oxfordshireguardian.co.uk Free

Santa 365 days a year as help is extended

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Extra special gift for Helen & Douglas House

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Fears curtain could fall on arts centre if flats approved

By George Welch

A "COMMUNITY jewel" in Wallingford fears for its future if a planning application for eight apartments next door is approved.

A.C Lester & Son Ltd, which has a storage firm based in the town, wants to build the homes with nine car parking spaces in the Lloyds Bank car park adjacent to the Corn Exchange.

Trustees, volunteers and cinema and theatre goers fear for the town landmark's future just a month after a major refurbishment.

They are worried that, because the building would share a party wall with the proposed homes, noise complaints from new residents could lead to a final curtain call.

However, agents acting on behalf of the developer dismissed the concerns as "totally groundless", saying the flats would be 'suitably sound-proofed' with acoustic barriers and triple-glazed windows.

Representatives from the Corn Exchange, which is yet to receive a noise complaint in its 40-year history, handed in a 719-strong petition to South Oxfordshire District Council planners this week.

Current legislation means noise-producing venues have to mitigate any complaints, implicating possible restrictions on the amount or timing of performances at the Corn Exchange.

Marketing director John Evans said: "This has the potential to impact the Corn Exchange financially or ultimately force us to curtail or even cease our performances.

"If a complaint from one new resident can silence the church bells, then we think this development has the potential to silence the Corn Exchange. And that would of course be really tragic for the town, having just completed a £700,000 project."

Hundreds of formal letters of objections have been submitted in a plea to stop the plan in its tracks.

Graham Gilgrass from Brightwell described the Corn Exchange as "the main cultural centre to Wallingford and of considerable benefit to the town and its people". As a result, any threat to its continued use "must be resisted at all levels by the community and local government".

Dawn Bevan, of Clapcot Way, Wallingford, regularly attends events at the Corn Exchange and hailed it as a "community jewel" that should not be put at risk.

John Carroll, from agents Carroll Architects and Surveyors, which contributed to the refurbishment, said in response that the planning officer encouraged development at the site.

Mr Carroll, who has 'personally enjoyed' events at the Corn Exchange over the last 25 years, said the layout of the flats "has been carefully designed".

The application has been deferred until May.

Prehistoric pancake race

IF you were in Wallingford on Tuesday you could well have been forgiven for thinking your eyes were deceiving you.

But the town hadn't slipped back to the Jurassic age it was just the annual pancake day race which attracted dinosaurs and gorillas among its competitors.

The costumes no doubt raised a few smiles in the gloomy weather.

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Staff 'must be safe' from fallout of Oxfam scandal

Union seeks reassurance for 'blameless' employees

By Eva Astreinidou

THE union representing more than 300 Oxfam staff is seeking reassurances its 'blameless' members are safe after the sexual misconduct allegations which have emerged over the last week.

Unite wants to know steps are being taken to restore the charity's reputation following revelations some of its senior aid workers used prostitutes after the disaster relief operation in Haiti in 2010.

Since the original claims there have been fresh allegations of sexual misconduct.

The Oxford-based charity's deputy chief executive Penny Lawrence has resigned over claims it concealed the findings of an inquiry into the use of the prostitutes.

Oxfordshire councillor Helen Evans, who worked as Oxfam's Global Head of Safeguarding between 2012 and 2015, said she had tried to speak to the senior leadership team several times about the lack of safeguarding resources to prevent sexual misconduct.

Speaking to Channel 4 News, she said: "It was a continual fight to try and get more resources. I felt that our failure to adequately resource [our safeguarding teams] was putting people at risk."

She said that one of the allegations involved an adult and child volunteer in the UK, adding: "That troubled me because I knew that Oxfam was not conducting the criminal record checks that it needed to conduct."

The charity has since said it has put in place further safeguarding measures as well as a 'whistleblowing' hotline.

This is in addition to an internal investigation in 2011 immediately after it became aware of the Haiti situation.

In an official statement last week, an Oxfam spokesperson said: "Our primary aim was always to root out and take action against those involved and we publicly announced, including to media, both the investigation and the action we took as a result.

"Four members of staff were dismissed as a result of the investigation and three, including the country director, resigned before the end of the investigation."

The Charity Commission has launched a statutory inquiry into Oxfam but no details have yet been released about the extent of this.

National officer for Unite, which represents staff at the headquarters and in Oxfam shops, Siobhan Endean said: "Oxfam staff are dedicated to delivering aid to some of the poorest people in the world and the vast majority are entirely innocent of any wrongdoing. It would be disastrous if recent events led people to stop donating to Oxfam and other charities."

Oxfam is Britain's fifth largest charity and receives £300million a year in government funds and public donations.

International development secretary Penny Mordaunt has threatened funding will be withdrawn unless the charity sorts the issue out properly.

InBrief

Two arrested over playground death

TWO further arrests have been made in connection with the death of a 16-year-old.

Harun Jama, from Birmingham, was found stabbed near a children's playground in Friars Wharf, Oxford, on January 3.

Craig Ford, 33 of Luther Street, Oxford, has been charged with his murder while Alice Ashcroft, 25 also of Luther Street, has been charged with two counts of possession with intent to supply class A drugs in connection with the death.

They are due to appear for trial at Oxford Crown Court on June 11.

Police have since arrested a 45-year-old woman and a 36-year-old man, both from Oxford, on suspicion of assisting offenders.

The pair have been released under investigation.

A post-mortem examination found the teenager's cause of death to be stab wounds to the abdomen, leg and chest.

Motorist killed

AN elderly man has died after his car came off a rural road near the village of Sunningwell, south of Oxford.

The 71-year-old died at the scene on Friday morning when his black VW Touran left an unclassified rural road linking Oxford Road and Sunningwell.

Police, paramedics, an air ambulance and the fire service were all called to the incident which took place at around 10.30am.

Contact police on 101 if you have any information about the crash.

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Knitters enjoy a good yarn at museum

THE River & Rowing Museum at Henley is about to be yarn bombed with colourful creations as part of its latest exhibition.

From today, the museum is displaying the work of Thames Path Together community art project who are celebrating knitting by reflecting the Thames Path and Bridge.

Yarn bombing is a form of street art where public spaces are covered in knitting and crochet.

David Worthington, chair of the museum, said they were delighted to be displaying the colourful creations in the community gallery.

He added: "The work of this talented group is bursting with energy and colour, inspired by our beautiful river side location, and we hope that our visitors will enjoy spotting local landmarks within their display!"

The impressive display for the River & Rowing Museum

Visitors to the museum tomorrow can take part in a free pom pom making session with the help of the yarn bombers.

Finished pom poms will then be hung on the museum's yarn tree.

For more details about the exhibition go to rrm.co.uk

Hand in knives during surrender at police station

POLICE are reminding people that knives can take lives in a campaign to help those wanting to surrender knives in their possession.

Thames Valley Police are targeting knife crime and those who carry knives in the latest phase of Operation Spectre.

A red knife surrender bin has been placed in Abingdon Police Station for members of the public to safely dispose of knives that they wish to give in until this Sunday.

Make sure all knives are safely wrapped in tape and newspaper before putting in the bins.

If you have any information about the possession of knives or criminal activity relating to this type of crime, call 101.

Courtney's Santa 365 days a year

By Owen Hughes

DUVETS, a washing up bowl and an ironing board are just a few of the everyday household items being collected by a Didcot charity for a family moving into their "forever home".

The town's not-so-secret Santa Courtney Hughes has moved on from her original gift scheme and has now set her sights higher.

A mum with two children moved out of an emergency refuge and into a two-bedroom house on Wednesday and Courtney has been helping to get all they need for their new home.

The 20-year-old originally set up Charity Secret Santa in 2012 to collect gifts for sick and vulnerable people at Christmas, but now operates the charity all year round.

She said: "I have been working closely with an emergency refuge these past few weeks and we are currently furnishing a house for a new family.

"It's amazing when the community gets behind you and supports you, because this is what the charity is all about."

The long list of items still being collected for the family includes cooking utensils, bedding and cleaning products.

Courtney, who also holds down a full-time job that sometimes means working nights, said she "hasn't really stopped" since last year and was still delivering gifts throughout January.

Since switching to running the charity full time, Courtney has received dozens of requests from

Courtney Hughes in Secret Santa guise now runs her charity all year round

people in need.

She said: "Now that I'm trying to help all year round we may take a day or two to reply.

"I don't want anyone to feel like I won't offer help; even if I can't physically get an item for them we can always point them in the right direction of who may be able to help and offer an ear if they need to chat about anything."

Courtney was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in 2012, which can leave her feeling extremely tired, but receives help from her mum when she struggles to maintain the illness.

"She does so much for the charity and I'm so grateful for her help and all my volunteers," she said.

To make a donation, contact Charity Secret Santa 365 via email at charitysecretsanta@live.co.uk or Facebook at www.facebook.com/charitysecretsanta

Bun throwing to be revived

ABINGDON will host its historic and quirky bun throwing tradition to commemorate the end of the First World War.

Thousands of buns will be launched from the roof of County Hall to crowds in the Market Place below on November 10 as part of the town's weekend of centenary events.

Abingdon Mayor Jan Morter said: "Over the course of this year and especially during the weekend of November 10 and 11 we will remember with sadness and pride those who gave their lives during the First World War.

"However, it is also right that we should remember those who made it through the war and returned to their town and their families.

"The bun throwing ceremony will commemorate, with gratitude, their return and the end of the conflict."

Town clerk Nigel Warner said further details about the ceremony and the full list of events would be revealed closer to the time.

Bun throwing ceremonies are organised periodically to commemorate major royal and national events.

There have been 35 bun throwing ceremonies in the last 257 years, with the most recent taking place to mark the Queen's 90th birthday in June 2016.

A bun throwing was also held in 2011 to mark the marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

Hundreds gathered in Market Place in 2016 for the last bun throwing to mark the Queen's 90th birthday

InBrief

Cyclist in collision

A CYCLIST is in a critical condition after colliding with a car.

Police were called to the B480 slip road to Chalgrove at around 5.30pm on Tuesday last week when the 25-year-old cyclist and blue Volkswagen Polo collided at the junction.

As we went to press we were told the cyclist remains at the John Radcliffe in serious condition.

Call 101 quoting 1110 6/2/18 to report any information.

Documentary film

ABINGDON filmmaker Ian Wiblin presents a festival favourite documentary at a special screening.

The View from our House, co-directed with Anthea Kennedy, is based on the memoirs of a young Jewish woman in 1930s Berlin who fled to the UK and later became a successful photographer.

Admission is £6 to the ABCD Film Society event at Abingdon Health and Wellbeing Centre on Thursday next week at 7.45pm.

GP message app

PATIENTS at Wantage's Church Street Practice can get messages from their GP via a free app.

The MJog Messenger app on Apple and Android smart phones allows GPs to securely send healthcare related messages to patients of the practice.

Messages can be PIN protected to ensure privacy and responses can be sent directly, including updates on results and reviews.

More information is online at www.mjog.com/messenger.

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Plenty to Smile about as charity given £26k boost by supporters

By Owen Hughes

THERE were smiles all round for an Oxfordshire charity supporting vulnerable young people after being presented with a cheque for nearly £26,000.

Gary Hibbins, manager of The Abingdon Bridge, thanked staff from the Milton Hill-based fuel company Infineum UK for the "fantastic" £25,836.20 donation.

Dick Richards is a trustee of the charity and helped establish Infineum's SMILE committee to support charities when working as a human resources manager at the company 14 years ago.

Employees at the business and technology centre have spent the past 12 months fundraising for the company's charity of the year and presented The Abingdon Bridge with the cheque on January 18.

Mr Richards said: "We are delighted with the donation.

"We have applied on two previous occasions to be their charity of the year and we were successful last year, and it has been a really good thing for us.

"What the SMILE committee do for the chosen charity of the year is match a certain amount of the fundraising that has been achieved by colleagues."

Sue Towlerton, centre, from the SMILE committee presented the Abingdon charity with the cheque last month

Cake sales, raffles, and half marathons were also put on by Infineum staff to raise funds for The Abingdon Bridge.

He added: "One group walked 26 miles along the Thames path and raised £1,000, and then the SMILE committee matched that and so we received £2,000.

"They ran a big auction at the end of the year where favours were given and that raised just under £5,000 this year, and SMILE made a donation of £1,000 to that."

The donation will be used to support the charity's latest initiative aimed at helping young people to become more aware of the risks associated with social media.

"SMART is our social media anxiety resilience team. The donation from SMILE will have a massive impact on the programme," Mr Richards said.

Sue Towlerton of the Infineum SMILE committee said she was "thrilled with the result" and praised the work being done by The Abingdon Bridge.

The Abingdon Bridge are also in their first year of three in receipt of £30,000 from Children in Need to support counselling services.

"The donation from SMILE will have a massive impact"
Dick Richards from The Abingdon Bridge

InBrief

Charities lottery

CHARITIES, community and voluntary groups across south Oxfordshire are encouraged to sign up to a new lottery to help them raise funds.

The South Oxfordshire District Council-run scheme will give residents the chance to enter a £1 weekly online draw and be in with the chance of winning prizes, ranging from free tickets to a jackpot up to £25,000.

From each £1 ticket bought, 60p will go to good causes in the community. The council will not receive any money from the lottery.

An event will be held at Cornerstone in Didcot on February 28 at 2pm for groups to find out more.

Any good causes wishing to attend should email policy.partnerships@southandvale.gov.uk or call 01235 422168.

Top class toilets

DIDCOT Arts Centre's Changing Places Toilet has been nominated for a national Sudocrem Changing Room Award.

One parent who nominated the venue said: "It is amazing that the Arts Centre is accessible for the whole community."

There are only 1,058 Changing Places toilets in the UK, meaning disabled children often have to be changed in inappropriate places.

Winners will be announced on March 9.

'Community will benefit' from 3G pitch

PLANS for a new 3G football pitch in Faringdon have been given the go ahead despite objections from neighbours.

The facility will be built on an open area of green grass behind Faringdon Leisure Centre on Farnham Road.

Proposals include lighting for evening use and 40 extra parking spaces in addition to the pitch.

The site will be used for football, hockey, non-contact rugby, circuit training and lacrosse.

The pitch is a joint £750,000 project between Vale of the White Horse District Council and leisure centre contractors Better.

Councillor Charlotte Dickson said: "This investment clearly highlights our commitment to ensuring that leisure activities are available for all our residents and it provides a real boost to what we already have on offer at Faringdon Leisure Centre."

Ben Whaymand, partnership manager at Better, echoed the councillor's comments saying the community will "benefit significantly" from the plans.

Fernham Gate resident Neil Barker said last week he was worried the development would distress his children, whose bedroom backs onto the facility.

In addition to noise and light pollution, objections also included confusing parking spaces and additional traffic congestion.

Work is expected to start on the pitch in the summer.

£3,000 fine for rubbish dumped in ditch

A FLY-TIPPER who dumped garden chairs, wooden frames and cardboard boxes in a ditch near Abingdon has been ordered to pay more than £3,000 in damages.

Andrey Kafica, 28 of Dodgson Road, Oxford, discarded the rubbish in the ditch by Peep O'Day Lane, a popular cycling route on June 5 last year.

The waste was traced back to a house in nearby Steventon and the occupiers provided Vale of White Horse District Council officers with details of the men who had taken it away.

Kafica was then interviewed and admitted the fly-tipping.

He said he had agreed to take the rubbish away as an additional job which had not been agreed by his employer.

Kafica pleaded guilty to charges of unauthorised depositing of waste and another of transporting controlled waste without the required registration at an Oxford Magistrates' Court appearance on January 30.

The rubbish dumped in the ditch in Abingdon last year

Kafica was fined £1,800 and also ordered to pay £1,076.75 costs and £201.42 compensation.

Cllr Elaine Ware, cabinet member for housing and environment at the Vale, said: "Aside from wasting precious time and money, fly-tipping also spoils our landscape and is potentially dangerous to people and wild animals."

Visit whitehorsedc.gov.uk/removingwaste for information on how to dispose of waste.

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News

Fire fighters attended a blaze at a house in Clanfield and while praising the bravery also warned of the risk involved

Neighbours' actions prompt warning

TWO people risked their lives by searching a burning building to rescue their neighbours.

The pair had to be treated by firefighters and paramedics after a home in the small west Oxfordshire village of Clanfield went up in flames shortly after 2.30pm on Wednesday last week.

No one else was injured as the occupants of the Wicks Close home were away.

The worried duo made the daring dash to rescue their neighbours because they thought they were trapped inside.

The fire service issued a strong warning after the blaze, as investigations continue into the cause.

Watch manager Chris Hollis said: "Fortunately nobody was inside the property, which was fitted with working smoke alarms meaning the occupiers should have been able to escape if they had been home when the fire started.

"Efforts were made by neighbours to enter the property and look for the occupiers, in the face of thick black smoke and intense heat.

"While these actions were undoubtedly brave, I must emphasise the extreme risk involved."

He added: "In the event of a fire we would always advise everyone to get out, stay out and call 999 for the fire and rescue service."

It took two firefighters using a thermal imaging camera to search the home and extinguish the fire.

Museum expansion would aid canalside

By Samantha McGregor

PLANS to extend the current Banbury Museum have been recommended for approval by council officers.

The museum wants to expand the building to include extra gallery space, a café, a lecture area, as well as offices, toilets and storage facilities.

The current site was built in 2002 and includes a basement which fronts onto Banbury Canal.

The extension would involve building over the current ramp/loading area at the rear and adding a storey to the permanent exhibition gallery.

At the moment the museum has 1,322 sqm of internal space – the extension will add 2,815 sqm to the inside of the building.

Oxfordshire County Council has raised concerns that the proposal does not include any on-site parking or cycle spaces and without a loading bay, deliveries will "cause an obstruction on a bend, creating a safety hazard" in Spiceball Park Road.

It wants the plans to be held until the road is realigned as part of the canalside development.

Cherwell District Council officers said there was enough nearby public car parking in the town centre to adequately cater for the museum, while large deliveries were "rare" – currently only about four a year.

The council's design and conservation officer said: "The proposed extension is located to the rear of the existing museum and will not therefore impact on the setting of the canal.

"It is anticipated that an enhanced offer at the museum could help to enliven the canalside and active consideration should be given to this in any detailed application."

Although the officer said the additional storey would impact on the canal setting and the design should be "carefully considered".

Banbury Town Council supports the application and the town's civic society welcomed the move saying it was a "long-awaited ambition for the museum and town alike".

Last month Cherwell council signed a deal to buy Castle Quay shopping centre and plans to press ahead with the Castle Quay 2 development on land next to the shopping centre, which includes building a multi-screen cinema, supermarket, restaurants and hotel.

Cherwell planning committee is due to decide the application for the museum tonight.

Swimathon to make a splash for area's charities

THE sixth Thame Swimathon, organised by the Rotary Club of Thame, will take place on Sunday, February 25.

A total of 20 teams have signed up for the event at Thame Leisure Centre from 11am to 3pm.

Teams including Thame Swimming Club, Barley Hill School and John Hampden School, will be fundraising for a range of charities and causes including Thame Rotary's main local charity for 2017-18, SeeSaw, which provides grief support for children across Oxfordshire, including support for schools after a death in their community.

Volunteers from Thame and District Lions Club, Thame Inner Wheel and Wheatley Park Interact Club will be supporting Thame Rotarians with the counting of lengths swum by teams.

Wii! It's winter sports fun

AN Oxfordshire charity is gearing up for a winter sports gaming marathon to rival the Olympics.

Video gamers will take on the challenge on Saturday next week to raise money for SpecialEffect.

The Rotaract Club of Oxford is inviting teams of up to four to participate in a series of winter sports on Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Winter Games on the Nintendo Wii games console.

Natasha Yelland, Rotaract Club of Oxford's President, said: "With the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang closing on the same weekend, we thought it would be a great idea to celebrate with a little winter sport action of our own to raise money for a fantastic charity."

The event has been organised as part of GameBlast18, the UK's largest marathon weekend, backed by big names in the games industry and aims to raise £100,000.

Tom Donegan, event co-ordinator at SpecialEffect, said GameBlast will "level the playing field for people with disabilities" and sponsorship raised would "change the lives of many".

Teams can register online to take part at the Northcourt Centre in Abingdon at http://oxfordrotaract.co.uk/gameblast18.

The charity supports people with disabilities by providing them with specialised games consoles and video games.

Gillian Taylor, an occupational therapist at SpecialEffect, supports a young girl to play video games with a specially adapted Wii controller

Budget rise to protect vulnerable

By Owen Hughes

COUNCILLORS in Oxfordshire will each be given a £15,000 budget to spend how they see fit following Tuesday's county council cabinet meeting.

Each of the 63 county councillors were given their own Councillor Priority Fund for projects in their area.

It was also revealed at the meeting that council tax will rise by an additional one per cent to deal with the extra pressure of social care.

Council leader Ian Hudspeth said the council was not "raising taxes unnecessarily" and would ensure the money was spent "efficiently".

In providing the £15,000 councillor funds, he said it "will deliver local solutions by county councillors who know their divisions best.

"I am sure many will view highway maintenance and repair as important but others might choose to put funding in to community buses, libraries or children's centres."

Oxfordshire County Council recently received nearly £1million from the government's Pothole Action Fund following the deterioration of roads during the winter cold snap.

Mr Hudspeth said: "For the first time, we have created a 10-year capital programme so we can take a longer view of the costs and benefits of road repairs."

He added the government cash for the roads will free up money that would have been spent on maintenance to be used elsewhere.

The cabinet also set aside £30,000 for First World War centenary commemorations and will reinvest funds from the additional one per cent Council Tax rise in social care.

Richard Webber, leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, said: "The only way to afford the multi-million pound solutions to our adult and child social care crisis, our roads, and the isolation felt by so many, is to return to the issue of unitary government for Oxfordshire."

A proposal to extend the £500,000 contribution for the homeless for an extra year in 2019/20 is subject to consultation.

InBrief

Bus driver sentenced

A WALLINGFORD bus driver who knocked a pedestrian over when he lost control of his double-decker has been handed a suspended jail sentence and a 24-month driving ban.

Cheikh Daouda Senghor, 41 of St Johns Road, admitted dangerous driving on June 24 last year.

Simon Smith miraculously managed to get up and walk into the Purple Turtle bar in Reading after being struck by the bus on Gun Street.

CCTV footage of Mr Smith being knocked over, picking himself up and going into the bar went viral.

Senghor was jailed for eight months, suspended for a year, at a Reading Crown Court appearance last week.

He was ordered to carry out 250 hours' unpaid work and undergo a rehabilitation activity requirement for five days.

He will also have to take an extended driving test at the end of his ban.

Tolkien fans unite

MORE than 200 J.R.R.Tolkien fans from across the world will meet at 'one of the loveliest settings for study in the world' later in the year.

The Tolkien Society will hold its 2018 get together at St Antony's College, Oxford, from September 20 to 24.

Visit tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018 for programme information.

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News

Vulnerable people hit by cuts to day centres

By Owen Hughes

FURTHER cuts to a day care facility could threaten the welfare of vulnerable people in north Oxfordshire, a councillor for the area has warned.

Banbury Cross and Neithrop councillor Surinder Dhesi said she is "seriously concerned" for the safety of her constituents should Oxfordshire County Council place any more strain on the Redlands Daytime Support centre.

The council opened an eight-week public consultation at the end of January seeking views on proposals to alter the way it charges for adult social care.

Cllr Dhesi said: "The likelihood of a positive outcome of this review is minimal because the county council is having to make further cuts in expenditure demanded by the Conservative government."

The consultation summary document claims the council spends more than £300million a year supporting vulnerable adults but it could achieve savings "in the region of £1.5m" if service users could partially cover costs themselves.

Councillor Surinder Dhesi fears for the safety of vulnerable people in north Oxfordshire if further cuts are made to services

Proposals include the introduction of a more standardised disability related expenditure assessment, a £210 annual arrangement fee for the ongoing provision of care, and removal of services the council is not obliged to provide to "people with no eligible needs".

Cllr Dhesi added: "To save money last year, the county council closed Stanbridge Wellbeing Centre and offered people places in Redlands, which catered for people with disabilities.

"The result – a much changed and unsatisfactory experience for previous users of the Stanbridge centre, including the lack of catering facilities which meant many users are deprived of their only hot meal of the day.

"Moving these two groups of vulnerable people into the same building at Redlands was a mistake motivated by cost cutting, not their welfare.

"I am seriously concerned for my constituents and everyone else who relied on these day-care centres, which provided safe, warm and loving environments with much needed social interaction and mental stimulation."

The council consultation documents state "no one would be left with less than the minimum level of income stipulated in the Care Act 2014 to live on".

The full consultation can be viewed on the council's website: https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/contributions/consultation-home

Aliens and space buggies are just two of the features golfers will encounter at Gravitee Golf

A golf course, far, far away

SPACE rockets, Martians and black holes – it is time for lift off in Oxford as a new crazy golf adventure gets ready to open its doors.

Gravitee Golf will crash land into the first floor of the Ozone Leisure Complex in Blackbird Leys, next to the Kassam Stadium, from Saturday.

The final touches to the £750,000 space project are being applied, with two 18-hole courses set to take astronauts on an out-of-this-world journey.

Crazy golfers will have to battle their way through four zones, putting on a space dock, inside a spaceship, on a Mars landing site and, just for good measure, in a mysterious forest planet following a crash landing.

A UV room of six holes, which took more than six weeks to perfect, along with a satellite and space buggy, add to the extra-terrestrial experience.

Co-owner Alistair Burnett, 27, said: "We wanted to do something that has not been done before in the industry.

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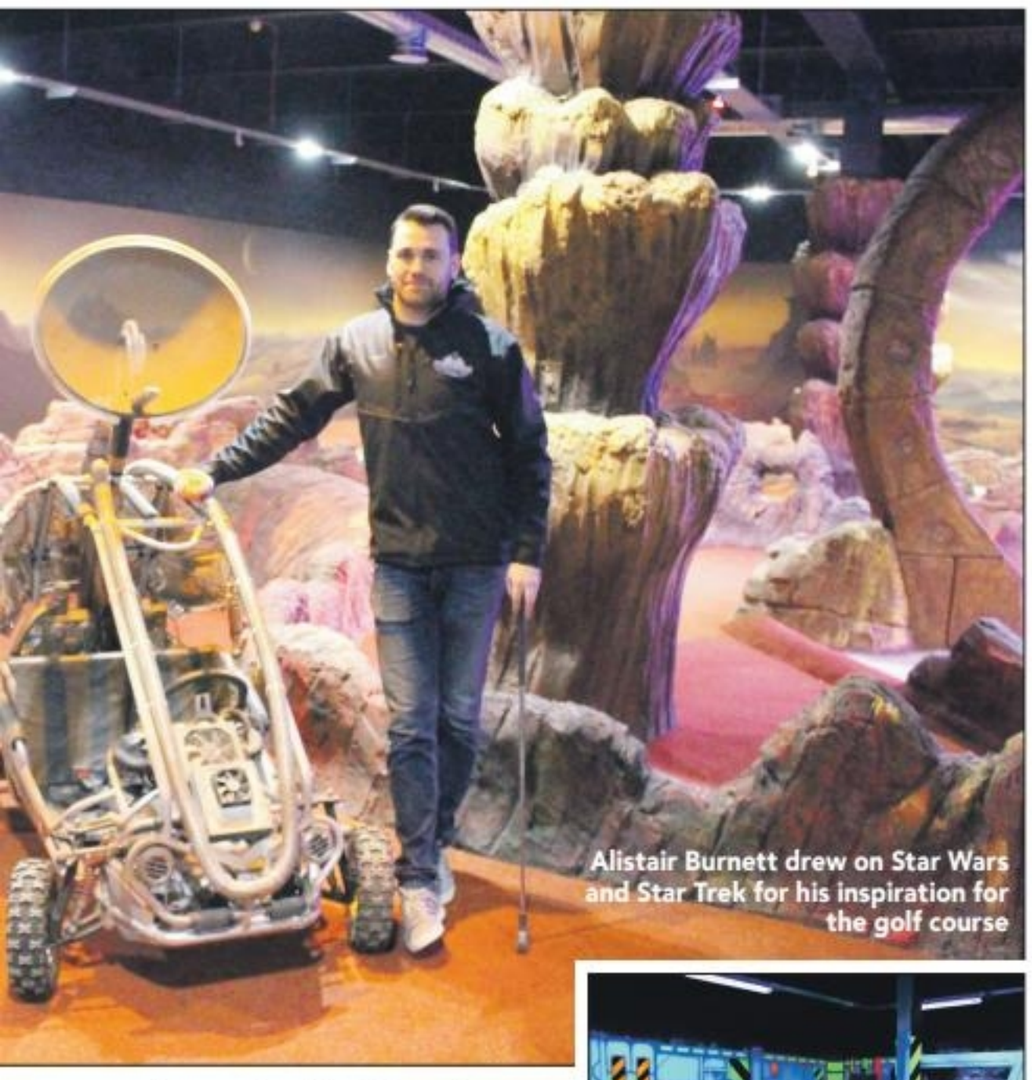

Alistair Burnett drew on Star Wars and Star Trek for his inspiration for the golf course

and space hasn't yet been done, so we thought we could really do well from this."

He added: "Growing up on things like Star Wars and Star Trek it was quite easy to get inspiration."

Gravitee Golf is thought to be one of the first space-themed adventure golf courses in the UK.

£1,500 fine for housing fraud

By George Welch

A FRAUDSTER who conned her way into a council house has been thrown out after admitting she already owned a three-bedroom home.

Gillian Norris lived in social housing in Great Milton, eastern Oxfordshire, for more than four years, having fraudulently applied via the housing register.

The 46-year-old has been fined £1,530 after councils discovered she already owned a home in Holyhead, Wales, at the time of applying. Had she disclosed this she would not have been eligible for council housing.

Representatives from South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxford City Council accused Norris of 'depriving a family in genuine need of a house', stressing social housing fraud is not a 'victimless crime'.

Norris, of Green Hitchings in Great Milton, pleaded guilty at Oxford Magistrates' Court last month to knowingly or recklessly making a false statement in connection to the allocation of housing.

It is the first time someone has been convicted for housing fraud in south Oxfordshire.

Magistrates heard she had been living in the three-bedroom SOHA Housing home, and had been renting out her other home to a family member.

She was caught following an anonymous tip-off.

Following her guilty plea on January 30, Norris was fined £250 and ordered to pay £1,250 and a £30 victim surcharge.

Jane Murphy, deputy leader of the district council, said: "Social housing is there to provide a vital resource for those who are in genuine need and do not have the money available to rent a home privately.

"We have a significant housing shortage, not just in south Oxfordshire but across the country, with people really struggling to find appropriate accommodation.

"By making and maintaining this fraudulent claim this lady has effectively deprived a family in genuine need of a house."

Ed Turner, deputy leader of the city council, added: "Social housing fraud is not a victimless crime, as it means people in housing need spend longer on housing waiting lists and in temporary accommodation.

"We hope it sends a clear signal that housing fraudsters will not be tolerated in Oxfordshire."

The councils are now working towards making the property available again on the housing register.

Thieves force driver to hand over van keys

A VAN driver was unharmed after thieves threatened him while demanding he handed over the keys.

The 31-year-old victim was loading the van in the quiet Oxford side street of Blackburn Close in Headington when he noticed two people in a black Vauxhall Corsa drive past before turning around and parking nearby.

Police said a man got out of the Corsa and threatened the victim before demanding the van keys at about 4.15pm on Friday last week.

He handed over the keys and the robber drove off in the van heading down London Road and Lime Walk, followed by the Corsa.

The victim was not injured and the carjackers have been described as Asian men aged between 20 and 30.

Police said the offender who demanded the keys is about 5ft 7ins tall with a slim build. He was wearing a black jacket and a black woollen hat.

The other had a large build and was also wearing a black woollen hat.

The stolen van is a silver Vauxhall Vivaro and the Corsa is black with tinted windows.

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Page 15

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News

All in a day's work for the fire service

FIREFIGHTERS often have to rescue creatures great and small as part of their job and last week that ranged from snakes to a horse.

Crews from Banbury and Hook Norton used thermal imaging cameras to track down scores of snakes that had escaped from their housing during a blaze.

The fire at the four-storey property in Middleton Road, Banbury, which started in the basement, was "rapidly spreading" to the ground floor.

It was only once crews had put out the fire and used a specialist fan to remove the smoke that they discovered the snakes had escaped.

About 100 snakes were recovered by fire fighters and were reunited with their owner for rehoming.

Watch manager John Callaway said: "We quickly established that the snakes were non-venomous and that no specialist assistance was needed.

"It was unfortunate that some hadn't survived the fire but many were saved."

An investigation carried out by the Fire Service determined the cause was an electrical fault.

Police also attended the incident and closed the road and supported residents.

Firefighters from four stations across the county were called to help a horse found roaming in a swimming pool in Didcot on Saturday, *pictured right*.

Crews had to drain the pool to free the equine, called Mackie, before a vet then helped to free the horse in the safest way.

Joined-up service would help patients

By George Welch

THE absence of effective teamwork in the health and social care system is holding back improvements to Oxfordshire's patient care, according to a new report by the health watchdog.

A review by the Care Quality Commission revealed that, although staff are dedicated, there was a lack of joined-up thinking between the five organisations responsible for providing care across the county.

According to the CQC, the lack of collaboration has led to a 'fragmented system' where there was duplication of effort and, at times, a reactive attitude to meeting standards.

The report, published on Monday, did however praise a "highly dedicated" workforce that 'goes the extra mile' and acknowledged an "increased ambition" among health leaders.

The review, carried out by three reviewers, an analyst and five specialist advisors, said: "In Oxfordshire we found that there was a lack of whole system strategic planning and commissioning with little collaboration between system partners.

"Although there was increased ambition to work together, system leaders continued to face significant challenges in coming together to formalise their ambitions through a joint strategic approach."

Inspectors visited services provided by Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust in November and December last year.

CQC assessors found the problems of recruiting care staff in Oxfordshire, which has a very high cost of living, were holding back improvement, as were incompatible computer systems across different organisations.

North Oxfordshire MP Victoria Prentis, who has long battled closures at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury, said the report was the "reality check the system needed".

However, the inspectors found that Oxfordshire had made progress in tackling 'delayed transfers of care', where people are unable to leave hospital when they are medically fit to do so.

The county also achieves a good or outstanding CQC rating across all areas of health and social care, which is above the national average.

The CQC highlighted three key areas of improvements. Recommendations include making services more local, improving information available to people who fund their own care and investing more in recruitment and retention of care staff.

See page 16 for more on how to have your say on health care provision in the county

Pub attack leaves man with injuries

A MAN was left with facial and dental injuries after being glassed in a Cowley bar during the early hours of the morning last month.

The 21-year-old victim was sat with friends in a booth at The Baron bar on Cowley Road, Oxford, at around 1.10am on January 30 when the offender approached the group and sat up against him.

He became aggressive when he was asked to move, smashing a glass on the floor before throwing a pint glass at the victim's face.

He then head-butted another man in the group leaving him with minor injuries before exiting the bar.

Police have now released a CCTV image of a man, *above*, who could have 'vital' information relating to the attack.

Investigating officer PC Dave Black urged anyone with information to contact them as soon as possible.

"I would like to speak to the man in this image as I believe he could have vital information about this incident."

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News

Bags packed to help homeless

By Owen Hughes

AN Oxford woman is donating backpacks full of essentials to tackle the city's homeless crisis.

Rachel Barrett, 21, of Kidlington, organised the Give Back with a Pack GoFundMe campaign to provide backpacks filled with vital supplies for rough sleepers and has already received £50 towards her £250 goal.

Rachel, who works part time as a receptionist, said: "I have some time to spare in the afternoons and thought why not use it do things to try and help people?

"I saw a post on Facebook of a young boy who was giving backpacks full of essential items and food to the homeless community in his area, and thought it would be a really good idea to bring to our city.

"I have ordered three backpacks and will soon be filling them with items to give away to the homeless community in Oxford city centre."

Among the items are socks, hand sanitiser, soap, toothbrush and paste, lip balm, a comb, nail clippers, plasters, sanitary products, tissues and a washcloth.

The backpack will also contain food such as a granola bar, a bag of nuts and dried fruit, instant noodles and porridge, crisps, cookies, bottles of water and disposable cutlery.

The fundraiser follows Prime Minister Theresa May's decision not to back Oxford West and Abingdon MP Layla Moran's campaign to scrap the "Dickensian" Vagrancy Act 1824.

Ms Moran, who presented the repeal to the House of Commons on Wednesday last week, said: "I am disappointed that the Prime Minister won't back my campaign to change the law to end the criminalisation of rough sleepers. I'll be keeping up the pressure on the government and will continue the fight."

Oxford City Council provided emergency shelters for rough sleepers earlier this week due to below-zero overnight temperatures.

Rachel has also signed up to The Good Neighbour Scheme to support vulnerable elderly people.

She added: "I think we need to take more care of our vulnerable people and help in any small way we can.

"It only takes one person to make a big difference to someone's life."

Donations can be made at www.gofundme.com/givebackapack

Sixth formers Louis and Jenna are given expert advice from Simon Keenlyside at Kingham Hill School

Pupils' opera masterclass

PUPILS were given a vocal masterclass by opera star Simon Keenlyside when he visited an Oxfordshire school.

Pupils at Kingham Hill School's music department were put through their paces singing a variety of operatic arias.

Each singer then had the opportunity to speak with Mr Keenlyside and get expert advice on vocal technique and feedback on their performances.

Mark Glanville, peripatetic vocal teacher at the Chipping Norton school, said: "Simon is one of the outstanding classical singers of his generation, acclaimed equally as a superlative opera singer who brings the detail of a great theatrical actor to his roles, and as one of the foremost recital singers of our day.

"These qualities make him the ideal person to pass on a vast reservoir of experience and knowledge to the next generation.

"It was a privilege to have Simon give a masterclass at Kingham Hill."

Mr Keenlyside has been performing opera across the globe since the late 1980s and has worked with the Vienna State Opera, the Royal Opera House and Metropolitan Opera in New York.

Graduate fails in £1m bid to sue for degree

AN Oxford graduate has failed in his bid to sue the university for £1million after missing out on a top degree.

Faiz Siddiqui, 39, of Bayswater, west London, said "inadequate teaching" at Brasenose College resulted in a low mark in his final year history paper nearly 20 years ago.

He alleged that his failure to achieve a first – he graduated with a 2:1 in 2000 – cost him entry into a top US law college and a lucrative career as a top international commercial lawyer, causing him to suffer from severe depression.

But High Court judge Justice Foskett dismissed the claim on Wednesday last week and said he was not convinced the teaching was "negligently inadequate".

Mr Foskett accepted Mr Siddiqui had suffered from severe depression but said it could not be attributed to his degree result as there was no evidence he was depressed or suffering insomnia at the time of the exams.

A spokesperson for Oxford University said it welcomed the court's judgement.

"History has been studied and taught with distinction at Oxford for longer than at almost any other university and the quality and range of its history teaching and examining across the collegiate university has long been widely recognised."

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Inquest finds flats explosion 'likely to be accidental' but neighbours demand answers

Petrol stored in flat was used to 'clean car parts'

By Eva Astreinidou

AN explosion caused by a man who stored litres of fuel in his West Oxford flat is most likely to have been accidental.

A day-long inquest into the death of Guide Schuette who died in the blast at the flats in Gibbs Crescent on Valentine's Day last year, heard he stored petrol in the flat to clean car parts with.

Coroner Darren Salter said: "The cause of the explosion was likely to have been caused from the ignition of petrol vapour while he sat in the flat, from a naked flame of smoking or a spark from a homemade electrical device.

"[It is clear] he used to test car components kept within the flat."

In the days leading up to the explosion, which destroyed three flats at Gibbs Crescent, Mr Schuette was heard screaming about his 'master' and threatening to burn the flat down.

In statements read by a mental health team, who assessed him at the scene on February 10, Mr Schuette said: "Yes I did say it, but doesn't mean I would do it. I have never set anything on fire."

The explosion at the flats in Gibbs Crescent last year Picture: *Alexander Hammonds*

Mr Salter told Oxford Coroners Court: "What concerns me is that he was heard saying he was going to burn the flat down days before and it can't be potentially ruled out that it was caused deliberately.

"Although as I say I think it is less likely."

The court heard from members of the mental health assessment team, who said that after the incident, Mr Schuette was put on a 'step-up' mental health programme.

The team attended his flat in the days leading up to the explosion, but deemed he was not showing any signs of a psychotic episode or signs of unpredictable behaviour.

Mr Salter added that Mr Schuette's original intention could have been to 'up the ante' as he felt he was not listened to following a series of noise complaints against a neighbour.

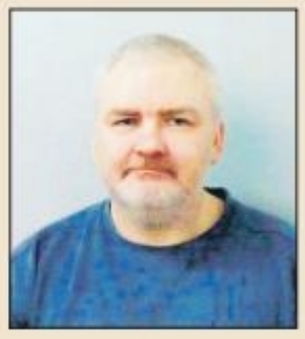
The remains of Mr Schuette, 46, were found in rubble on February 18, four days after the blast.

His cause of death was recorded as burns and injuries consistent with an explosion.

'More could have been done'

DISAPPOINTED residents living in the block of flats say more could have been done to prevent the explosion.

The blast, which was caused by the ignition of large quantities of fuel stored in Guido Schuette's flat were said to 'most likely' have been an accident.



The court heard the housing provider A2Dominion had previously asked Mr Schuette, *pictured*, to remove fuel it was aware he had stored in a communal area of the building – but had not visited his flat.

The court also heard how Mr Schuette had long on-going disputes with one of his neighbours and was reported to have been racially abusive.

Annie May who lived in the flat above, said after the inquest that she had been threatened by Mr Schuette and that she feared for her safety. She added she had made several requests to A2Dominion to be moved.

Several complaints had been filed against him to A2 Dominion, which owns the block of flats at Gibbs Crescent.

Speaking at the inquest, Dawn Wightman, housing director at A2Dominion, said the company had no knowledge of how Mr Schuette was using his flat.

After the inquest, she said:"Our focus now is on continuing to support the residents of Gibbs Crescent and moving forward with our plans to restore and improve the estate."

Cllr Susanna Pressel, who was at the inquest, said: "I feel that the mental health service, the police and the housing association should all have done much more to support Mr Schuette in the years before the explosion.

"He racially abused his neighbour, Annie May, for 14 years and they allowed this to continue, even when she said that her life was in danger. She begged A2Dominion, the housing association, to move either her or him away, but they didn't. It was only by a lucky chance that she didn't die with him."

A2 Dominion says it has begun work to redevelop the flats and has been consulting with residents on its plans.

A pre-application is due to be submitted to Oxford City Council.

Prices are correct time at time of going to press.

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Take a Perch in new offices

By Samantha McGregor

A NEW type of office aimed at supporting entrepreneurs, small businesses and self-employed people has opened its doors in Bicester.

Called Perch, the site offers "metropolitan style" co-working space for up to 67 people and has opened in a former retail unit in Franklins House, in Pioneer Square.

The project has been led by Cherwell District Council and is the first of two co-working spaces the council is opening in the town.

Perch, which is fully owned by the council but run by an external operator Point of Difference, opened on Tuesday last week and it is hoped the move will give the town centre a boost.

Cllr Lynn Pratt, *pictured*, Cherwell's lead member for estates and the economy said: "We saw this project as an opportunity to collaborate with local tradespeople, not only to provide work during the construction of the space, but to then provide residents with a space to work from in the long term.

"We have invested in Bicester as its continued growth brings more people to the area and as a result a higher demand for flexible work space.

"We are delighted that Bicester Vision also chose to invest in this project, and are providing sponsored desk space for Bicester businesses."

Perch offers hot desks, access to meeting rooms and refreshment facilities for a membership fee. There will also be a number of networking opportunities each month.

Residents of Bicester who own a company may also be eligible for a sponsored membership via Bicester Vision.

Co-working offices are designed for people who work from home, are self-employed, or who have started small businesses, to work together, exchange ideas and build a community.

The office space was designed in conjunction with local businesses and craftspeople.

Separately, the council is also funding and building an eco business centre at the north west Bicester eco town site.

For more information go to perchcoworking.co.uk

Holiday Inn to expand

PLANS for a 64-room expansion at a north Oxford hotel have been approved.

Holiday Inn on the Peartree Roundabout will be redeveloped with the existing wing of the hotel which contains the fitness suite being demolished to make way for a four-storey extension.

The work will increase the number of rooms from 154 to 218 and a small gym and meeting rooms will also be built.

The expansion will offer employment for 10 more employees, bringing the total to 40.

Objectors complained about the excessive height of the proposed development, insufficient parking and a loss of leisure facilities. These were dismissed by Oxford City Council planning officers.

Architects Dexter Moren Associates has designed the extension to the site to the east of Woodstock Road and the A34.

Director Mark Wood said: "Small is beautiful. Clients are increasingly approaching us to develop and enhance parts of their existing hotel portfolio. This extension will provide high quality facilities within a contemporary extension that sits harmoniously within its setting."

DMA said soft yellow brick and lighter stonework would be used alongside large windows to make it more attractive.

There is also a three-storey Travelodge hotel at Peartree Interchange Services, to the south of Holiday Inn.

Plans to expand Holiday Inn to 218 rooms have been given the go ahead
Picture: *Dexter Moren Associates*

InBrief

Naming charge

CHERWELL District Council has started charging developers £25 to name a new street and number new homes.

Previously the council swallowed the charge. Cllr Colin Clarke, Cherwell's lead member for planning, said: "Of the five planning authorities in Oxfordshire, Cherwell is the only council that doesn't already apply this charge so it will be no great shock to developers."

Since February 2013, 316 new streets have been created in Cherwell district, a cost of £7,900 to the council.

Legally the council cannot make a profit from the service but it must ensure the council's costs are met.

Kebab awards

FOR the second year running, Thame's Atalay Kebab Van has been shortlisted in the Kebab Van of the Year category at the sixth British Kebab Awards.

Townspeople are being urged to vote to help the business retain its crown as the best Kebab Van in Britain.

For more information or to vote go to voting.britishkebabawards.co.uk

>> So True! 80s star's support for Sobell House *Page 20*

From back left, host Joel Dummett, Arkadiusz Malek, Steve Chadwick, Valentina Tachy, Gary Merralls, Mark Adams, Tomasz Jasniak, Graham Clarke and Michal Dolega; from bottom left, managing director Phil Southall and Sam De-Gouveia

Winners helping to drive bus company

LONG service and exceptional performance was honoured as bus drivers picked up accolades at the inaugural and fantastically named The Really Amazing Awards.

The Oxford Bus Company celebrated the achievements of its staff in a ceremony, which also recognised sister companies Thames Travel and Carousel, at the Ashmolean Sculpture Gallery on Thursday last week.

Colleagues directly nominated the winners, bar the Long Service Award, from a shortlist of three in seven categories.

The winners are:
A Team: Carousel Engineering
Customer Hero: Steve Chadwick
Embracing Innovation: Sam De Gouveia
Health, Safety, Well-being: Gary Merralls
Rising Star: Valentina Tachy
Star of the Year: Geoff High
Unsung Hero: Mark Adams

Long Service:
25 years: Tim Curry, Mounir Hanna, Shahid Shah, Dave Gibbs, Charlie King, Graham Clarke, Gordon Boland and Ray Woodhouse
35 Years: Ron Friend

The event, hosted by comedian Joel Dommett, is about "recognising and rewarding those who bring the 'best version of themselves' to work," according to Phil Southall, The Oxford Bus Company's managing director.

He added: "We have so many great people doing excellent work day in, day out and this can too easily go unnoticed."

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News

Have your say on healthcare

WANT to have a say in how healthcare is delivered in your area?

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust is holding a series of roadshow events to engage with patients, carers, colleagues and members of the public to help mould the future of healthcare provision.

People interested in joining the trust can become a member of the council of governors and represent the views of the public in their area.

Community involvement manager at the trust, Julie Pink said: "By voting for a governor, or volunteering to stand as a governor themselves, individuals are able to shape the future of our trust and have their voices heard on important local healthcare topics."

Membership registration is free and can be done online or at one of the roadshow events.

Upcoming events will be hosted at: Abingdon Community Hospital on Tuesday from midday to 3pm; Wallingford Community Hospital on March 1 from 9am to 12pm; Townlands Community Hospital, Henley, from 1pm to 4pm; Bicester Community Hospital on March 5 from 10am to 1pm and Witney Community Hospital on March 26 between 9am and midday.

Body cameras to prevent abuse

RECYCLING centre staff in Oxfordshire will be given body worn cameras to better protect them from abusive users.

Employees at seven household waste recycling centres in the county will adopt the wearable kit similar to that worn by the police, parking enforcement and trading standards.

Oxfordshire County Council said the cameras have encouraged positive interaction with the public and hopes the devices will discourage intimidating or abusive situations from escalating, capturing evidence if it does.

The cameras will be worn as part of standard work uniform but will not record all the time.

Members of staff will need to inform the person when they intend to turn the cameras on.

More than 1.25million people visited the sites last year with around 20 escalated reports of physical and verbal abuse by a member of the public on recycling centre staff.

County councillor Yvonne Constance, cabinet member for environment, said: "The safety of our staff and customers is our number one priority and using this technology will only be an enhancement.

"Knowing that you could be filmed could for many people be enough to make them think twice before they act."

Redbridge Waste Recycling Centre in Oxford will be the first to adopt the recording gear.

Charity of the year 2018 – Helen & Douglas House

Reality TV star's big gift to boost funding

By George Welch

BIG Brother star Craig Phillips is not one to shy away from grand gestures, as the series one winner becomes the latest to throw his support behind under-pressure Helen & Douglas House.

The property developer gave away all his prize money when he was crowned winner of the reality TV show in 2000 – and 18 years on he is still proving to be an exceptionally good guy.

Craig said 'I do' to girlfriend Laura Sherriff as the couple tied the knot in front of 200 guests at Cheshire's Peckforton Castle on Friday with the newly-weds thinking of others on their big day too.

The couple asked that instead of gifts, guests donate cash to Helen & Douglas House, our charity of the year, which cares for terminally ill children and young people.

The 46-year-old said it was Laura's brother Daniel who was diagnosed with a brain tumour just after he was born, who inspired them.

He said: "He battled with the disease for three years and towards the end of his short life, he was in a lot of pain but there was nothing more the doctors could do for him.

"This is when Laura's mum remembered hearing about Helen & Douglas House.

"Offering Daniel a place to get the care he deserved, within 10 minutes of his arrival the hospice had done what the local doctors couldn't, they gave Daniel a place to find comfort and gave Laura's family the chance to make the most of the time they had left with their son."

The couple, who jetted off for a skiing honeymoon to Colorado, will also auction Laura's wedding dress to raise even more funds.

Kay Honner, from Helen & Douglas House, said it was "wonderful" to meet Craig and Laura on their visit to the hospice earlier this month.

She added: "It is so very kind of them to ask for donations to Helen & Douglas House rather than receive wedding gifts.

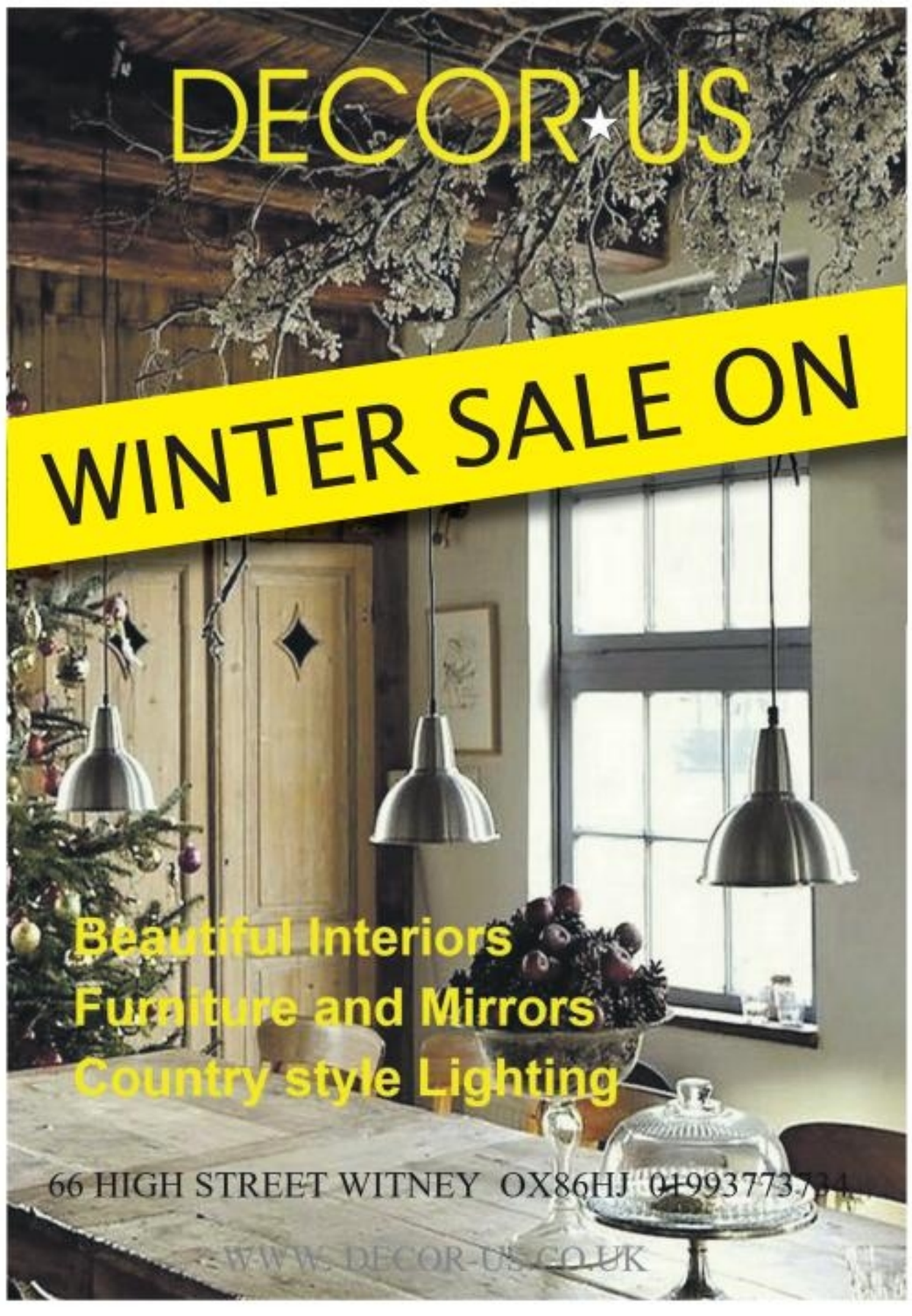
"The money they raise will make a huge difference to the lives of local terminally ill children and their families at Helen House."

Craig Phillips and wife Laura are asking guests to donate cash to Helen & Douglas House instead of giving gifts – they will be launching Mr and Mrs DIY, a digital platform offering tips on a range of home and garden jobs after their honeymoon Wedding photograph: *www.philipburkephotography.com*

Oxfordshire Guardian & THE OXFORD PAPER Supporting Helen & Douglas House hospice care for children and young adults

Last month Helen & Douglas House reluctantly announced it would close Douglas House in Magdalen Road in August, warning the entire hospice would be forced to close in two years if it did not take drastic action to slash expenditure.

Visit tinyurl.com/ycgq3o9t to donate to Helen & Douglas House.



Put on your dancin' shoes and join in

A FUSION of dance styles will be showcased across the city as Oxford's annual spring dance festival promises to be 'as inclusive and adventurous as ever'.

The Dancin' Oxford extravaganza will return to the city streets between March 2 and 11, bringing an energetic mix of contemporary choreography.

Now in its 12th year, the 10-day festival has vowed to deliver a jam-packed programme, including a 24-hour danceathon, workshops for children and families and a football-inspired hip hop performance.

The city council's dance officer Claire Thompson described the billing as a "treat" that "should suit all tastes".

She said: "Each festival has its strengths and this spring one is no different.

"For our annual free event in the city centre we are upending the dance floor for a series of aerial performances danced to a driving musical score. What a treat."

There will be a record number of professional companies involved, lots of taster sessions plus, for the first time, aerial performances on the Westgate Shopping Centre façade.

The festival will launch with Gecko's The Wedding at the Oxford Playhouse, described as a thought-provoking play about 'forced marriage' and social contracts.

For full programme details and ticket information visit dancinoxford.co.uk.

See our entertainments section for more on The Wedding.

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News

Joining a larger trust will help to improve schools

By George Welch

THE multi-academy trust that runs three primary schools in Blackbird and Greater Leys will join a larger schools group.

Blackbird Academy Trust (BAT) schools, which oversees more than 1,000 pupils at Orchard Meadow School, Pegasus School and Windale Community School, will transition to United Learning by the end of the academic year.

Trustees and the three headteachers of the trio of schools agreed that working with a bigger trust would improve the quality of the schools in the long term.

Chris Jones, chairman of BAT, said: "It is our responsibility to secure high performance over the long term and we concluded some time ago that this could best be achieved under a bigger parent trust with deeper resources.

"After very thorough review we are delighted to have reached agreement with United Learning to merge BAT schools with them.

"United Learning has the track record, the resources and the values which we believe will greatly benefit the pupils, staff and parents of Orchard Meadow, Windale and Pegasus."

United Learning already runs schools in Banbury, including North Oxfordshire Academy and Hanwell Fields Community School, as well as other academies and independent schools across the country.

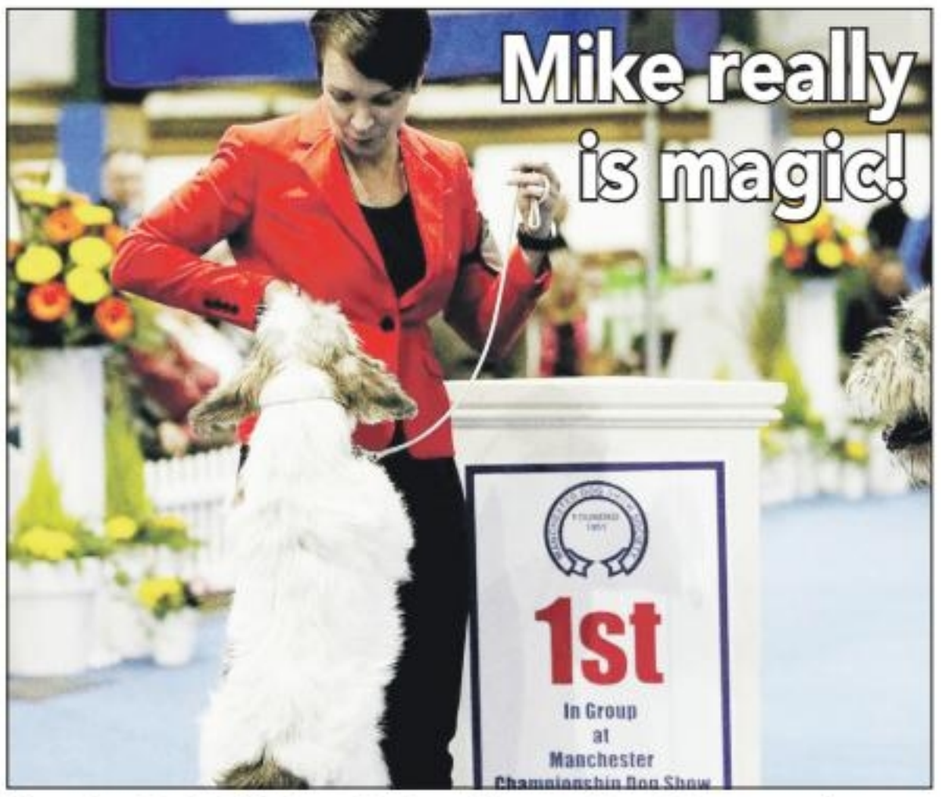
Its chief executive, Jon Coles, said the partnership would speed up improvements at the Oxford schools.

In the latest Ofsted reports, Orchard Meadow and Windale are deemed as requiring improvement while Pegasus was considered as good by inspectors.

Mr Coles said: "There is a great deal to admire about the three schools and we know how popular they are with local families.

"There are, of course, also areas for further improvement that the schools are ambitious to achieve.

"By being part of our group, they will be able to retain everything that is currently successful while accessing the sharing of expertise, best practice and operational management that our schools benefit from and that will help them drive up improvement at pace."



Champion Magic Mike jumps for joy with owner Sara Robertson at the Manchester Championship Dog Show. Picture: *Anna Szabó*

TOP dog Magic Mike was jumping for joy after storming to success at one of the UK's largest dog shows.

The 18-month-old Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen beat 9,381 other dogs to claim the title at the prestigious Manchester Championship Dog Show in Stafford last month.

Magic Mike was led to victory in the Best in Show category by owner Sara Robertson from Wallingford.

"It was such an amazing feeling of joy and pride when Mike was chosen as the Best in Show winner," she said.

"You picture it happening but never think it will be your own dog which gets selected. Mike is such a sweet boy."

Success runs in the family too – Sara's husband Gavin handled Mike's mother Jilly to the Best in Show title at Crufts in 2013.

The rough-coated Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen was originally bred to trail hare in the bramble-filled terrain of the Vendée district of western France. They are known to be active, happy, independent and willing to please.

Mum-of-two Sara added: "PBGVs are a breed which enjoys life regardless of what sort of day you may be having yourself – they always make you smile."

Williams helps to engineer future careers

GROVE-BASED Formula One team Williams is hoping to "kick start a skills revolution" by encouraging young people to pursue a career in the industry.

Williams is backing the Government's Year of Engineering 2018 campaign to raise the industry's profile among seven to 16 year olds as a viable career option.

The campaign promotes STEM subjects among young people to improve mathematics and science skills.

Williams has previously offered initiatives such as the Williams Engineering Academy, Autosport Williams Engineer of the Future award, and internships and apprenticeships to give students a head start in a career in Formula One.

Human resources director, Nicola Salter, said: "For 40 years, Williams has been at the forefront of engineering innovation.

"Many of the sport's legendary engineering figures began their career at Williams so we know the importance of nurturing and developing engineering talent.

"To inspire, encourage and attract a new generation of engineering stars, we a delighted to be supporting the Year of Engineering, which we believe could kick start a skills revolution."

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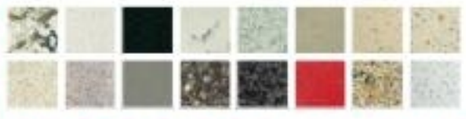

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News

Go back to the 80s for hospice

By George Welch

BUILDING work on a new state-of-the-art clinic will begin this spring as the county's largest hospice launches a campaign to fund its first room.

The expansion of Sobell House, based at the Churchill Hospital, will allow more people facing the end of their life to have access to specialist palliative care when they need it.

Building one room in the new clinic will cost £50,000 and the hospice is hoping this year's Moonlight Stroll event – its 12th annual fundraiser – will be one of its biggest to date.

Hundreds of night time walkers are being encouraged to don big hair, loud clothing and even dig out their old Walkman as this year's theme goes all 1980s.

The stroll might not be until June 23 but, officially launched last month, the appeal has already received the backing of 80s icon Tony Hadley.

The former Spandau Ballet frontman has encouraged everyone to get their funky 80s attire on and enjoy the nine-mile walk.

He said: "Back in the New Romantic period we wanted to be different, we used to enjoy surprising and shocking people with what we wore.

"We wanted to make a statement and get people to look at us. That's my challenge to all you 80s fans out there – get your New Romantic gear out and join the walk."

The 57-year-old added: "The wonderful work that Sobell House Hospice does makes a true and significant difference to the lives of families affected by life-limiting and terminal illness.

"The team creates some wonderful and lasting memories for the families who need this vital hospice care service."

Kevin Game, a fundraiser at Sobell House, has organised all 12 Moonlight Stroll events.

He said there are 1,000 places available and that this year's target is a whopping £100,000.

Sobell House is in the third year of a four-year plan to invest £9million to increase its service, £5million of which has already been raised.

Overall, the multi-million pound investment is funding an expansion of hospice care throughout the county in Oxfordshire's four main hospitals.

The additional £4million is sought through community fundraising, corporate support and its charity shops.

For more information about the Moonlight Stroll event register at www.sobellhouse.org.

Sobell House said more information about its expansion will be revealed in due course.

Charity working with teachers to raise awareness of mutilation

AN Oxford charity against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) met young people last week to raise awareness of the dangers posed to children.

Oxford Against Cutting is a charity working to help prevent FGM of girls and women living in Oxfordshire and the South East.

The charity marked the United Nation's International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM by meeting children and handing out a new toolkit to primary school teachers.

The toolkit supports teachers in talking about FGM and body rights with children to help end female circumcision.

Fatou Ceesay, community outreach director for Oxford Against Cutting, said: "FGM is a harmful practice that at least 3.6million girls are at risk of experiencing in the next 12 months globally.

"OAC will support teachers to encourage children to talk to teachers, school nurses, or anyone they feel safe with at school, if they are worried about FGM or any type of bodily or sexual harm."

OAC has received grants from Oxford City Council of more than £4,500 over the past 12 months.

Councillor Tom Hayes said the council takes a "zero-tolerance approach to FGM" and the grants "renew our commitment to ending it".

Call the NSPCC on 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk if you or someone you know may be at risk of FGM.

InBrief

Donate furniture

RESIDENTS are being urged to donate their old furniture to help others in a new initiative.

Sanctuary Housing and Cherwell District Council have helped fund the Faithworks Furniture Project, which collects and restores furniture and white goods that are no longer wanted and redistributes them to those in need.

The project, run by volunteers from Banbury Community Church, has already helped almost 650 families in the Banbury area, with items such as washing machines, armchairs, sofas and dining tables.

To find out more, or to donate furniture, call 07979 043851 or email sheena@makinglifework.co.uk

Units approved

THE £40m redevelopment of Grove Business Park continued last week after 10 units were approved.

This is the next phase in the transformation of the 32-acre business park which is set to double the building area to 400,000 sq ft.

The latest buildings to be approved total 36,000 sq ft and range from 1,900 sq ft to 6,700 sq ft.

Join the big lunch

GROUPS, charities and businesses can apply for a stall at Bicester's Big Lunch, which will take place in the town centre on Sunday, June 10. Visit bicestersbiglunch.org.uk

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FENCING FEATURE ADVERTISEMENT

"I honestly believe that Colourfence is the best general purpose fencing product on the market today!"

Get ready for Winter

Now's the perfect time to replace your garden fence once and for all. Anna Ryder Richardson - Designer and Television Presenter - takes a closer look at Colourfence, the revolutionary low-maintenance system.

It's been ten years since I regularly graced TV screens helping transform people's living spaces with MDF and stripped floorboards. Recently it's been more "celebrity muck out" than "celebrity make-over" as I took up the challenge of owning my own Wildlife Zoo in Tenby. In this time I've learnt quiet a lot about fences and having researched the various options for my own benefit I thought I would share my knowledge with a wider audience.

The latest design processes mean there is now a tremendous array of fencing products for you to choose from, constructed from a variety of materials. Each has its own attributes, and ultimately it can often come down to a matter of personal preference. For me, there was one unique system that stood out as providing the best balance between price and functionality which eradicates fencing problems for good. Or for at least 25 years. Colourfence. For quality, value, longevity, aesthetic design, this fencing system ticks all the boxes. Fencing made for the 21st century that will transform the look of your garden which is supplied and fitted by a company whose customer service is as good as the product.

In my view, Colourfence is the 'Rolls Royce' of fencing – just without the exclusive price tag. What's more, it's guaranteed to stay in place in up to 130mph winds and is virtually maintenance free.

To find out how the experts from Colourfence might help you, I suggest you call **01865 582 171** and speak to their team.

Colourfence: The ultimate garden fence?

For many Colourfence is perhaps the ultimate choice. For the last 15 years it's been widely used across the UK and has steadily gained a reputation for its quality. By using the highest specification Colorbond steel in the fence structure itself, complemented by the highest level of customer service from accredited Franchisees, Colourfence is now regarded by many as the premier fencing solution in the market. Immune to the rot and resistant to the weather that so quickly effects wooden fences, Colourfence has none of the drawbacks of wood - plenty of additional benefits and what's more it's better value!

Call **01865 582 171** for more information

Gardeners' Questions

Q Wooden fence panels just don't seem to last - is there a storm resistant alternative?

A The Colourfence system has been tested under cyclonic conditions to withstand storms with wind gusts up to 130mph. Unlike your wooden fence - once professionally installed - Colourfence really will stay up!

Q No matter what I treat my wooden fence with - nothing seems to prevent it rotting or looking shabby for very long.

A Treating your fence is a thankless and expensive task. It's also a losing battle. Wood simply want's to rot. Colourfence offers a low-maintenance alternative where by an occasional wash down will keep it looking great for up to 25 years! GUARANTEED!†

THIS WEEK'S JOB

†Terms and conditions apply - full details available on request

Head into Winter - with COLOURFENCE

The only garden fence you will ever need!

Every gardener knows that it pays to plan ahead. If you are one of the thousands of people who watched helpless, as winter winds battered their garden, it will not be a surprise that garden fences are almost always the first casualty. Whether you have previously patched, painted or simply prayed to keep your fence going, there's no escaping the fact that timber fences will always fall victim to the weather. With Colourfence you can put your garden straight once and for all. Colourfence is scientfically tested and cyclonically rated to ensure when professionally installed, it can withstand wind gusts of up to 130mph. Once it's up – it stays up and is guaranteed to look good year after year. Safe, extra secure and hassle free – you will NEVER need to paint it, treat it or patch it. An occasional hose down will be all you need do to keep it in top condition for years to come. In fact the system is so durable that Colourfence will guarantee† their fencing to last at least 25 years. Available in a range of colours to suit any garden, with or without decorative trellis, the highly skilled installation team make short work of their dramatic transformations. Your sad old fence will be e_ ciently cleared and replaced, leaving you to get back to enjoying your rejuvenated garden. Pricing is just as straightforward and equally attractive. Starting costs are in line with inferior timber systems but with no annual treatments required, Colourfence saves you time and money each and every year. Their aim is your peace of mind. With a 25 year guarantee† Colourfence speaks for itself and promises a lifetime of hassle-free enjoyment.

For more information and to arrange a FREE no obligation site visit simply call one of their helpful team on 01865 582 171.

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colourfence.co.uk

†Terms and conditions apply - full details available on request

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COLOUR FENCE

Your guide for your leisure time in & around Oxfordshire

Out & About

Elvis Costello brings his army of fans to Blenheim

Join Rita Ora & Grace Jones at Henley

Gecko present the wedding with a twist at the Playhouse

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MAY	27
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Out & About

Music greats star at Henley

By Samantha McGregor

A STRING of comedy, music, fireworks and arts acts have been lined up for this summer's Henley Festival.

Rita Ora, inset, will open the event on July 11, the iconic Grace Jones takes to the stage on Thursday with her energetic set guaranteed to include a string of costume changes and dance-club hits including her reinvention of Edith Piaf's classic La Vie En Rose.

Other music legends at the festival include multi-Grammy-winning composer, producer and guitarist Nile Rodgers, while Saturday night will bring Curtis Stigers and The Ronnie Scott's Big Band presenting Sinatra At The Sands.

Henley Festival will close in true style on Sunday, July 15, with English National Opera performing with soloists, full orchestra and chorus, all under the baton of ENO Music Director Martyn Brabbins.

Their repertoire is taken from operas including Carmen, The Marriage of Figaro, Madam Butterfly, Turandot and La Traviata as well as a little Gilbert & Sullivan to top the night off.

The comedy stage welcomes performances by 25 comedians including Paul Merton, Lucy Porter, Mark Watson, Lee Nelson and Dominic Holland.

The comedy line up will also include a very special evening of unscripted, unrehearsed and spontaneous comedy from Dead Ringers' impressionists Jon Culshaw and comedy producer Bill Dare in their sell-out show The Great British Take Off.

Elsewhere at the festival catch the Jazz Club in the Spiegel Tent, with performances by Purdy will be Soul/R'n'B band The Staks Band, King Pleasure and the Biscuit Boys and on Sunday catch Miss Kiddy and the Cads.

The BBC Music Introducing stage, created in 2007 to support unsigned, undiscovered and under the radar musicians, is back again and for a taste of global world music as well as home spun British folk visit the Bedouin Tent.

Henley also boasts a foodie festival, this year Michelin starred chef Angela Hartnett will be taking the reins of Europe's biggest field restaurant, creating a bespoke menu exclusively for Henley, at the Riverside Restaurant.

Elsewhere there will be art displays, a family day and a fireworks display will close each night.

For more information or tickets go to henley-festival.co.uk

What could be worse than a baby with a monobrow?

COMEDIAN Ellie Taylor is set to play two dates in Oxford as part of her spring tour.

Hot off the heels of her 20 date autumn UK tour, Ellie is back by popular demand with her show This Guy.

Married and in her 30s, Ellie has overcome the surprise of being in a dreadfully happy marriage only for society to test her with a new question – whether or not she wants to breed.

But with the maternal instinct of a pitta bread, Ellie has questions – how do you know if you're ready to be a parent? Should you just take the risk regardless? And what if Ellie does have a baby and her career stalls, or her marriage breaks down or more terrifying of all, the kid has a monobrow?

Ellie has appeared on BBC's Live At The Apollo, Lets Sing and Dance for Comic Relief, Mock the Week and The John Bishop show.

Ellie is also back for a second series of the BBC 2 show The Mash Report, hosted by Nish Kumar and returning in early 2018.

She will perform at Chipping Norton Theatre on Saturday, March 3, and Oxford's North Wall on Saturday, March 17.

For more information view ellietaylorcomedy.com

Draw on tips from top illustrator

Join children's writer and illustrator Nick Sharratt at Chipping Norton Theatre on Saturday at 11.30am for a family-friendly, fun filled draw-along for all ages.

Nick's best-selling picture books include You Choose, Shark in the Park and Pants, he's also the illustrator of Jacqueline Wilson's phenomenally popular children's novels.

He'll be showing visitors how he creates characters like Tracy Beaker and Timothy Pope, as well as sharing ways to invent your own crazy creatures and top tips as your draw along with him.

Bring pencils, paper and something to lean on. To book this fun workshop go to chippingnortontheatre.com

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Most Artists Considered

CASH PAID

Say 'I Do' to a wedding with a twist

By Samantha McGregor

AWARD-WINNING physical theatre company Gecko brings its most "ambitious" show to date to the city.

The Wedding will come to the Oxford Playhouse from March 1 to 3.

In their first ever visit to the Playhouse, Gecko taps into the complex ideas surrounding community, state and feelings of belonging all set within the ceremony and concept of marriage.

Described as "a beautiful show with visceral storytelling and emotionally fuelled physicality", this production explores the idea of 'forced marriage'.

It has been created to question how we are chained to society - the rules it imposes, the ideas it fills our heads with and the actions we feel we must follow.

Set in a dystopian world, The Wedding imagines we are all brides, wedded to society and bound by a contract.

It questions the terms of this relationship? And can we consider a divorce?

Tumbling through every emotion, and inciting a revolution, Gecko have created an intense show focusing on issues around migration and social cohesion.

Led by artistic director Amit Lahav, The Wedding is the perfect example of Gecko's powerful performance style; visual, visceral and ambitious theatre crafted to inspire, move and entertain.

This production was inspired by the complexities of human nature, and brings these contracts and issues of social cohesion within communities into question.

Gecko will host a post-show panel discussion at each venue on the tour to explore two key themes from the show – integration and social cohesion, and affecting change in the community.

Audiences will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and questions with the team.

Gecko's other productions include Institute and Missing.

Tickets for The Wedding at Oxford Playhouse start at £10 and are available from the ticket office by calling 01865 305305 or view oxfordplayhouse.com

Bookshop to stage gothic horror Dracula

CREATION Theatre is back this spring with a new adaptation of Bram Stoker's classic gothic horror Dracula.

Staged in Blackwells Bookshop, this production starts a six-week run from March 3.

Set in Whitby in the 1950s, two characters, Mina and Jonathan, are unpicking the story of the eponymous Count through memories, letters, diary entries, and newspaper articles.

Jonathan has been suffering from a mysterious illness since a trip to Transylvania, and Mina is haunted by the memory of her friend Lucy, who died after succumbing to a similar illness.

As Mina and Jonathan pack away Lucy's possessions, they piece together the events that lead to her death and the strange characters they encountered during her illness, which seem to hang like a shadow over their relationship.

Theirs is an unnerving tale of human relationships, sexuality and succumbing to desire.

For the first time in a Blackwell's show, the production will use innovative audio-visual design to conjure up creatures of the night and allow the cast to interplay with them.

Dracula has been directed by Helen Tennison, who was behind last summer's Alice, and was adapted for the stage by award-winning writer Kate Kerrow.

Tickets cost from £12 and are available from Creation's Box Office on 01865 766266 or view creationtheatre.co.uk

Out&About

Elvis and his army at Blenheim

By Samantha McGregor

OXFORDSHIRE summer festival Nocture has announced its Saturday night line-up with Elvis Costello starring in the show.

Saturday night will also feature performances by song-writing icons The Waterboys and Nick Lowe.

Tickets have gone on sale for the four-day concert series taking place from June 14 to 17 at Blenheim Palace.

The trio join already announced artists Gary Barlow, Nile Rodgers & Chic and Soul II Soul who will perform at the show.

Saturday's triple bill presents an exclusive opportunity to see three of the UK's most revered, idiosyncratic songwriters on the same bill as they perform music from across their extensive back catalogues against the backdrop of The Great Court at Blenheim Palace.

Lowe famously produced Costello's first five albums and this concert will signal the first time the two have shared a bill since 2013.

Multiple award-winning Costello, who was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2003, said: "It's great to find ourselves in English summertime as part of the season of concerts alongside our old acquaintance, Nile Rodgers."

Nick Lowe is best known for his songs Cruel to be Kind and I love the Sound of Breaking Glass and has worked with a string of artists including Costello, the Damned, Dave Edmunds and Johnny Cash.

Irish/Scottish folk rock band The Waterboys, who were formed in Edinburgh in 1983 by Scottish musician Mike Scott, are most famous for tunes including The Whole of the Moon, which reached number 3 in the UK charts, Fishermen's Blues and Glastonbury Song.

The line-up for Friday June 15 will be announced soon.

Tickets for Elvis Costello, The Waterboys and Nick Lowe start at £40 and are on sale now.

For more information and ticket details go to nocturnelive.com.

In Memory Of a great tour

GLASWEGIAN art punks Catholic Action are set to return to Oxford to promote their debut album.

The band will perform at The Cellar on Wednesday, as part of a 14-date UK tour.

Playing tunes from their latest record In Memory Of, frontman Chris McCrory said: "In Memory Of has been a long time coming for us, and it wouldn't have happened were it not for you.

"It's a record we're incredibly proud of and we hope you are too.

"So, we're thrilled to be heading out on a headline tour of the UK to perform tracks from In Memory Of and more for the people that made it happen. Thank you! And see you in February."

The brainchild of former Casual Sex member Chris McRory, the band has already picked big support from the BBC's Huw Stephens.

Following the release of their acclaimed debut album In Memory Of, Catholic Action toured with alternative rock trio Kagoule last November, which included a stop at the iconic 100 Club.

The band have also just been confirmed for SXSW in 2018 alongside other British rising stars including The Magic Gang, Nadia Rose and Shame.

Catholic Action formed in 2014 by McCrory alongside Jamie Dubber on bass and Ryan Clark on drums and Andrew Macpherson as lead guitarist.

For more information view cellaroxford.co.uk

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Out&About Competition

WIN tickets to the Photography Show

Closing date: Thursday, March 1, 2018

The Photography Show, the event for everyone passionate about photography and moving image, returns to the NEC Birmingham from 17-20 March 2018 featuring the latest kit from big brands and a jam-packed speaker line-up.

Get hands-on with new products from Canon, Epson, Fujifilm, Hasselblad, Manfrotto, Nikon, Olympus, Panasonic, Sigma and Sony to name a few, plus tripods, albums and accessories you didn't even know existed from over 220 exhibitors.

The Great Outdoors, a new stage for 2018, will feature live demos and expert advice on image capture outside, including dramatic landscapes, getting close to nature and special occasions whatever the weather. The enhanced Mobile & Social Stage will offer the opportunity to explore mobile imaging technologies and how social media can make (or break) a photographer, and the dedicated Video Stage will showcase cutting-edge products alongside technical and creative help on how to get the best out of moving image production skills.

Plus, catch exciting live action tutorials on the Live Stage, find out about intriguing photography projects and techniques in Behind the Lens, discover how drones can enhance your projects in the Drone Zone and hear thrilling insights into the journeys of world-renowned photographers at the Super Stage and more!

For more information, please visit: www.photographyshow.com/pr_1

Get your ticket

To guarantee that you'll be at the show in March, you can buy tickets to the show by visiting www.photography-show.com/pr_1. Tickets to Super Stage sessions, masterclasses and for the VIP package are limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

Win tickets!

The Basingstoke Observer has teamed up with The Photography Show to offer 5 lucky readers and their 'plus one' the chance to attend 2018's most exciting photography event, absolutely free!*

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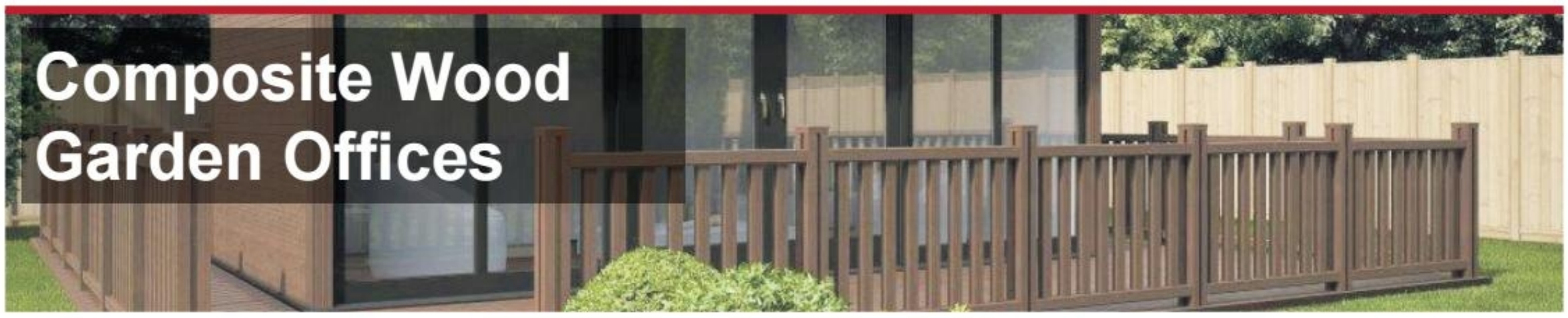

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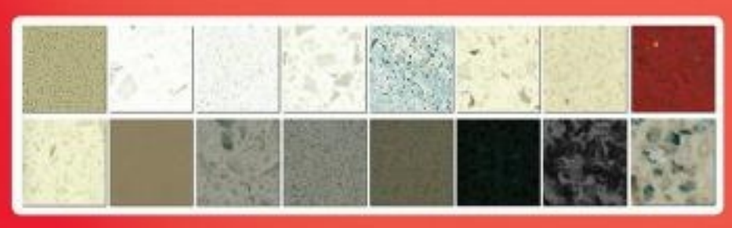

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14	10	16	23	3	19	1	2	■	13	10	19	21
20	■	19	■	17	■	14	■	3	■	18	■	19
16	19	24	22	26	26	19	■	19	11	18	22	1
17	■	22	■	10	■	23	■	11	■	17	■	14
■	19	16	22	9	20	■	23	19	8	8	20	18
15	■	■	■	19	5	25	10	26	■	26	■	22
19	26	19	7	■	11	20	8	■	1	21	19	11
16	■	1	■	6	17	8	7	17	■	■	■	9
3	10	8	11	17	12	■	17	11	17	16	21	■
20	■	20	■	11	■	7	■	12	■	20	■	1
8	19	3	22	12	■	22	11	22	18	22	19	26
17	■	19	■	7	■	4	■	6	■	7	■	20
17	25	18	7	■	12	17	25	17	19	18	17	12

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 T	19 A	20	21	22	23	24	25	26 L

Each number in our Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

MAGIC SQUARE

SOFTEN IT, NOW TWIST

Using all 16 letters of the phrase above, form four words each of four letters which will fit in the grid to form a magic square in which the words can be read both horizontally and vertically.

Quiz Challenge

1. Which miracle by Jesus, reported only in the gospel of John, took place in the village of Bethany?
2. Which film, directed by Alan Parker, dealt with racial murders in America?
3. Which royal residence, about 11 miles south of Windsor, is the home of the Earl and Countess of Wessex?
4. What R is the breeding ground of penguins?
5. The cities of Benghazi and Tobruk are in which African country?
6. Which 11-letter word meaning not diminished in intensity or severity, is almost only ever used to describe a disaster?
7. English naturalist Steve Backshall has a black belt in which martial art?
8. With whom did the comic character Desperate Dan live?
9. By adding just one letter to the word smile, which three-syllable word can be made?
10. In which US state is all of the land over 1,000 metres above sea level?

NONAGRAM

N	A	T
A	T	E
L	I	Z

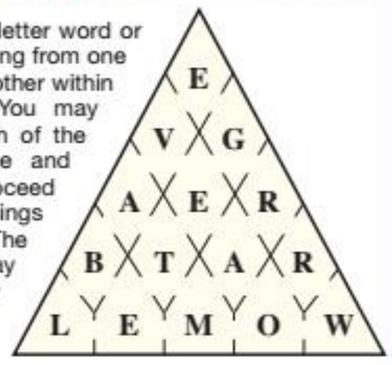
How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Nonagram? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used only once. At least one word using all nine letters can be found.

Guidelines:
21 Good; 25 Very Good; 29 Excellent.

Any word found in the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Tenth Edition) is eligible with the following exceptions: proper nouns; plural nouns, pronouns and possessives; third person singular verbs; hyphenated words; contractions and abbreviations; vulgar slang words; variant spellings of the same word (where another variant is also eligible).

WORD PYRAMID

Spell out a 15-letter word or phrase by moving from one chamber to another within the pyramid. You may only enter each of the chambers once and may only proceed through openings in the walls. The first letter may appear in any chamber.

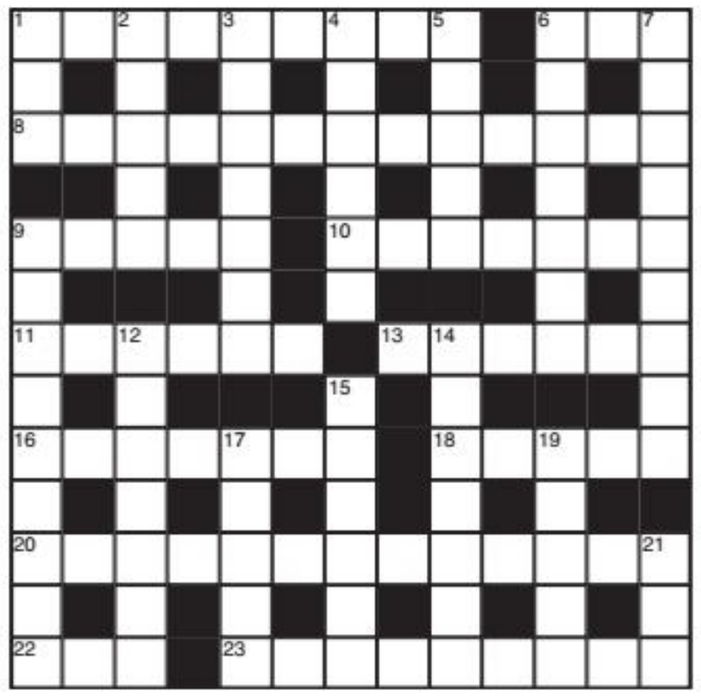


FIVE ALIVE

JO	CU	MC	UP	RY
ER	■	RO	■	IU
DS	TR	OA	IV	EN
TE	■	WS	■	LG
SR	UT	EL	AE	DS

Here are two miniature five-square crosswords using the same grid – but the letters have been mixed up. You have to work out which letters belong to which crossword.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Left a sheet of paper alongside the case (9)
6. Sailor in the starting position (3)
8. But usually it is not even going to the other side of the tracks (5,8)
9. Small room with nothing but an instrument (5)
10. Rebuilt tin hall as home for busy workers (3-4)
11. Confirm if a try has been converted (6)
13. Bag that can hold everything in the rain (6)
16. Relatively favourable (7)
18. Car test or the vehicle undergoing it (5)
20. Agreeing with special reporter (13)
22. Final objective (3)
23. She has a will to try a magician's acts, say (9)

DOWN

1. Father left his friend (3)
2. Riotous feast is only the half of an enlightening experience (5)
3. How an unsuccessful tightrope walker might deteriorate (4,3)
4. Trail a sort of noose (6)
5. Assault at the film studio (4)
6. It is not important whether there are four or six in the test (7)
7. Controlling device to be included at frequent intervals (9)
9. Story in the Bible (9)
12. Twisted red tape thinner at one end (7)
14. Moan I am producing gas (7)
15. Pictures of southern headlands (6)
17. Give free medical attention? (5)
19. The king hides one of them (5)
21. Levy on nails, say (3)

SUDOKU

Easy Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box. **Hard**

9	6			5	4	8		3
				2	7	6	4	
		8		6				
7	2			3	1			
3	1	9	2	4	8	5		
	8	4			5	1		
	4	7			6		1	
		6			3		2	8
	5						9	

		2	9					
	1	8			6			9
					1		5	
	4					3	1	
	8			2	9			7
5								
			8					
9	6			4			7	
				3			4	

EQUALISER

5 5
4 ○ 3 ○ 1
3 3
6 ○ 3 ○ 9
1 4

Place the four signs (add, subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same.

Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematical law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

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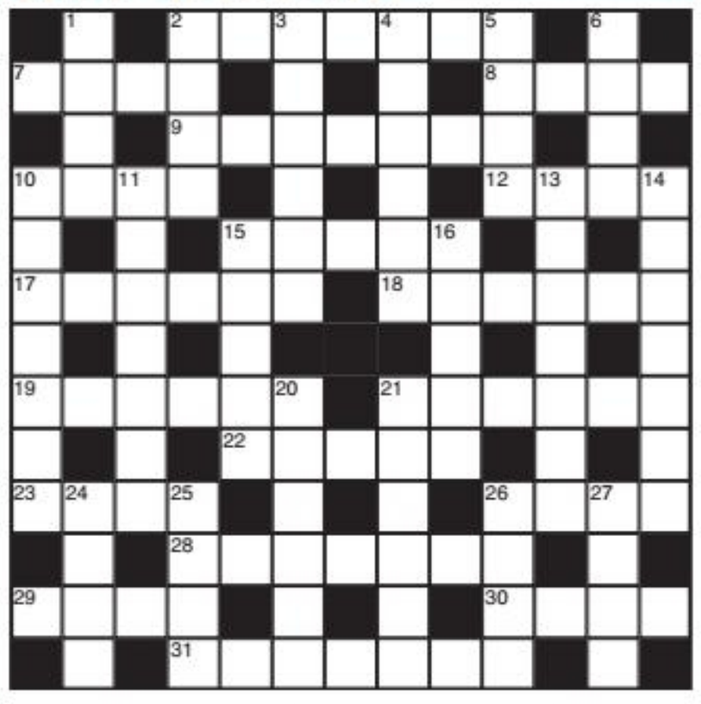
QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

2. Envious (7)
7. Cougar (4)
8. Eject (4)
9. Ardent (7)
10. Humming sound (4)
12. Milky gem (4)
15. Brute (5)
17. Reposed (6)
18. School absentee (6)
19. Baby (6)
21. Push roughly (6)
22. Cluster (5)
23. Small stream (4)
26. Augury (4)
28. Gaping (7)
29. Make indistinct (4)
30. Capital of Latvia (4)
31. Expand (7)

DOWN

1. Spiritual leader (4)
2. Musical style (4)
3. Astounded (6)
4. Wind instrumentalist (6)
5. Indifferent (2-2)
6. Eastern continent (4)
10. Obstacle (7)
11. Piquant (7)
13. Apparition (7)
14. Forgetful (7)
15. Existence (5)
16. Body of soldiers (5)
20. Garden tool (6)
21. Younger (6)
24. Lazily (4)
25. Stringed instrument (4)
26. Man-eating giant (4)
27. Therefore (4)

SOLUTIONS

QUIZ CHALLENGE: 1 Raising of Lazarus; 2 Mississippi Burning; 3 Bagshot Park; 4 Rookery; 5 Libya; 6 Unmitigated; 7 Judo; 8 Aunt Aggie; 9 Similar; 10 Colorado.

CROSS CODE

1 C	2 K	3 B	4	5 Z	6 W	7 V	8 S	9 R	10 G	11 U	12 N	13 Q
14 H	15 J	16 M	17 E	18 T	19 A	20 O	21 Y	22 I	23 P	24 X	25 F	26 L

EASY SUDOKU

9	6	2	1	5	4	8	7	3
5	3	1	8	2	7	6	4	9
4	7	8	3	6	9	2	5	1
7	2	5	6	3	1	9	8	4
3	1	9	2	4	8	5	6	7
6	8	4	7	9	5	1	3	2
2	4	7	9	8	6	3	1	5
1	9	6	5	7	3	4	2	8
8	5	3	4	1	2	7	9	6

HARD SUDOKU

6	5	2	9	7	3	1	8	4
4	1	8	2	5	6	7	3	9
7	9	3	4	8	1	6	5	2
2	4	9	7	6	8	3	1	5
3	8	1	5	2	9	4	6	7
5	7	6	3	1	4	2	9	8
1	3	4	8	9	7	5	2	6
9	6	5	1	4	2	8	7	3
8	2	7	6	3	5	9	4	1

MAGIC SQUARE: fist; into; stew; town.

EQUALISER: Clockwise from top left – subtract; add; divide; multiply. Total: 2.

WORD PYRAMID: Vegetable marrow.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD:

Across – 1 Portfolio; 6 Tar; 8 Level crossing; 9 Cello; 10 Ant-hill; 11 Ratify; 13 Wallet; 16 Neptolic; 18 Motor; 20 Correspondent; 22 End; 23 Testatrix.

Down – 1 Pal; 2 Revel; 3 Fall off; 4 Lariat; 5 Onset; 6 Trivial; 7 Regulator; 9 Chronicle; 12 Tapered; 14 Ammonia; 15 Scapes; 17 Treat; 19 Their; 21 Tax.

QUICK CROSSWORD:

Across – 2 Jealous; 7 Puma; 8 Oust; 9 Zealous; 10 Buzz; 12 Opal; 15 Beast; 17 Rested; 18 Truant; 19 Infant; 21 Jostle; 22 Group; 23 Rill; 26 Omen; 28 Yawning; 29 Blur; 30 Riga; 31 Enlarge.

Down – 1 Guru; 2 Jazz; 3 Amazed; 4 Oboist; 5 So-so; 6 Asia; 10 Barrel; 11 Zestful; 13 Phantom; 14 Lethean; 15 Being; 16 Troop; 20 Trowel; 21 Junior; 24 Idly; 25 Lyre; 26 Ogre; 27 Ergo.

FIVE ALIVE:

(1) Across – Jumpy; Stove; Steal. **Down** – Jests; Moose; Yield.

(2) Across – Occur; Drain; Rules. **Down** – Order; Crawl; Rungs.

NONAGRAM:

alate; ante; anti; atilt; attain; entail; inlet; ital; late; latent; latte; latten; leant; leat; lent; lint; lite; natal; neat; nett; teel; teenal; tail; taint; tala; tale; talent; TANTALIZE; teal; teat; tein; tent; tian; tile; tilt; tine; tinea; tint; titan; title; zeta.

Thursday February 15th

BBC 1

TOP TV

8.00pm Animals with Cameras

MORNING

9.15am Winter Olympics

AFTERNOON

1.00pm BBC News at One
1.30pm Regional News and Weather
1.45pm Doctors
2.15pm The Coroner
3.00pm Escape to the Country
3.45pm Get Away for Winter
4.30pm Antiques Road Trip
5.15pm Pointless

EVENING

6.00pm BBC News at Six
6.30pm Regional News and Weather
7.00pm The One Show
7.30pm EastEnders
8.00pm Animals with Cameras
9.00pm Death in Paradise
10.00pm BBC News at Ten
10.30pm Regional News and Weather
10.45pm Question Time
11.45pm Drugs Map of Britain
12.10am Winter Olympics
3.10am Winter Olympics
6.00am Breakfast

BBC 2

TOP TV

6.30pm Great American Railroad Journeys

MORNING

9.15am Animal Park Easter Special
10.00am Homes Under the Hammer
11.00am Wanted Down Under
11.45am Heir Hunters

AFTERNOON

12.15pm Bargain Hunt
1.00pm Winter Olympics

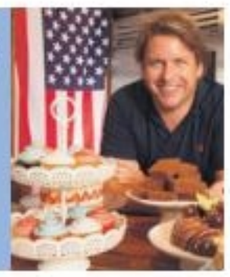
EVENING

6.00pm Eggheads
6.30pm Great American Railroad Journeys
7.00pm Winter Olympics
8.00pm Sea Cities - Sunderland
9.00pm Generation Gifted
10.00pm The Mash Report
10.30pm Newsnight
11.15pm Dragons' Den
12.15am Chris Packham: In Search of the Lost Girl
1.15am Food: Truth or Scare
2.00am MasterChef
3.00am Weather for the Week Ahead

ITV

TOP TV

2.00pm James Martin's American Adventure



MORNING

8.30am Lorraine
9.25am The Jeremy Kyle Show
10.30am This Morning

AFTERNOON

12.30pm Loose Women
1.30pm ITV Lunchtime News
1.55pm ITV News London
2.00pm James Martin's American Adventure
3.00pm Tenable
4.00pm Tipping Point
5.00pm The Chase

EVENING

6.00pm ITV News London
6.30pm ITV Evening News
7.00pm Emmerdale
7.30pm Plastic: Can You Live Without it? Tonight
8.00pm Emmerdale
8.30pm The Cruise
9.00pm Children Who Kill
10.00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather
10.30pm ITV News London
10.45pm UEFA Europa League Highlights
11.45pm Lethal Weapon
12.30am Jackpot247

Channel 4

TOP TV

4.00pm A New Life in the Sun

MORNING

7.10am 3rd Rock from the Sun
7.35am Everybody Loves Raymond
8.30am Frasier
10.05am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
11.00am Undercover Boss USA

AFTERNOON

12.00pm Channel 4 News
12.05pm Couples Come Dine with Me
1.05pm Posh Pawnbrokers
2.10pm Countdown
3.00pm A Place in the Sun
4.00pm A New Life in the Sun
5.00pm Four in a Bed
5.30pm Extreme Cake Makers

EVENING

6.00pm The Simpsons
6.30pm Hollyoaks
7.00pm Channel 4 News
8.00pm George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
9.00pm Married at First Sight
10.00pm The Job Interview
11.00pm First Dates Hotel
12.00am One Born Every Minute
1.00am Joe Wicks: The Body Coach
1.55am Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
2.50am Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny
3.45am China Between Clouds and Dreams

Channel 5

TOP TV

7.00pm The Wonderful World of Puppies

MORNING

8.20am Digby Dragon
8.35am Rusty Rivets
8.55am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
9.05am Mofy
9.15am The Wright Stuff
11.15am GPs: Behind Closed Doors

AFTERNOON

12.10pm 5 News Lunchtime
12.15pm Cowboy Builders
1.15pm Home and Away
1.45pm Neighbours
2.15pm Ncis: Conspiracy to Murder
3.15pm A Husband's Confession
5.00pm 5 News at 5
5.30pm Neighbours

EVENING

6.00pm Home and Away
6.30pm 5 News Tonight
7.00pm The Wonderful World of Puppies
8.00pm Bargain Loving Brits in the Sun
9.00pm Dale Winton's Florida Fly Drive
10.00pm Extraordinary People
11.05pm Elizabeth: Our Queen
12.00am Super Casino
3.10am The X Files
4.00am The Railways That Built Britain, with Chris Tarrant
4.45am House Doctor
5.10am Divine Designs

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Friday February 16th

TOP TV

BBC 1

9.00pm Requiem

BBC 2

9.00pm Nigel Slater's Middle East: Iran

ITV

8.00pm Love Your Garden

Channel 4

10.00pm The Last Leg

Channel 5

8.00pm Celebrity Five Go Barging

MORNING

BBC 1		BBC 2		ITV		Channel 4		Channel 5	
9.15am	Winter Olympics	**9.15am**	Animal Park Easter Special	**8.30am**	Lorraine	**7.10am**	3rd Rock from the Sun	**8.20am**	Digby Dragon
		10.00am	Homes Under the Hammer	**9.25am**	The Jeremy Kyle Show	**7.35am**	Everybody Loves Raymond	**8.35am**	Rusty Rivets
		11.00am	Wanted Down Under	**10.30am**	This Morning	**8.30am**	Frasier	**8.55am**	Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
		11.45am	Heir Hunters			**10.05am**	Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA	**9.05am**	Mofy
						11.00am	Undercover Boss USA	**9.15am**	The Wright Stuff
								11.15am	GPs: Behind Closed Doors

AFTERNOON

BBC 1		BBC 2		ITV		Channel 4		Channel 5	
1.00pm	BBC News at One	**12.15pm**	Bargain Hunt	**12.30pm**	Loose Women	**12.00pm**	Channel 4 News	**12.10pm**	5 News Lunchtime
1.30pm	Regional News and Weather	**1.00pm**	Winter Olympics	**1.30pm**	ITV Lunchtime News	**12.05pm**	Couples Come Dine with Me	**12.15pm**	Cowboy Builders
1.45pm	Doctors			**1.55pm**	ITV News London	**1.05pm**	Posh Pawnbrokers	**1.15pm**	Home and Away
2.15pm	The Coroner			**2.00pm**	James Martin's American Adventure	**2.10pm**	Countdown	**1.45pm**	Neighbours
3.00pm	Escape to the Country			**3.00pm**	Tenable	**3.00pm**	A Place in the Sun	**2.15pm**	Ncis: Conspiracy to Murder
3.45pm	Get Away for Winter			**4.00pm**	Tipping Point	**4.00pm**	A New Life in the Sun	**3.15pm**	Fatherly Obsession
4.30pm	Antiques Road Trip			**5.00pm**	The Chase	**5.00pm**	Four in a Bed	**5.00pm**	5 News at 5
5.15pm	Pointless					**5.30pm**	Extreme Cake Makers	**5.30pm**	Neighbours

EVENING

BBC 1		BBC 2		ITV		Channel 4		Channel 5	
6.00pm	BBC News at Six	**6.00pm**	Eggheads	**6.00pm**	ITV News London	**6.00pm**	The Simpsons	**6.00pm**	Home and Away
6.30pm	Regional News and Weather	**6.30pm**	Great American Railroad Journeys	**6.30pm**	ITV Evening News	**6.30pm**	Hollyoaks	**6.30pm**	5 News Tonight
7.00pm	The One Show	**7.00pm**	Winter Olympics	**7.00pm**	Emmerdale	**7.00pm**	Channel 4 News	**7.00pm**	The Wine Show
7.30pm	Would I Lie to You?	**8.00pm**	Mastermind	**7.30pm**	Coronation Street	**8.00pm**	Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast	**8.00pm**	Celebrity Five Go Barging
8.00pm	EastEnders	**8.30pm**	A Vicar's Life	**8.00pm**	Love Your Garden	**9.00pm**	First Dates	**9.00pm**	Cruising with Jane McDonald
8.30pm	Room 101	**9.00pm**	Nigel Slater's Middle East: Iran	**8.30pm**	Coronation Street	**10.00pm**	The Last Leg	**10.00pm**	Will and Grace
9.00pm	Requiem	**10.00pm**	QI	**9.00pm**	Lethal Weapon	**11.05pm**	Rude Tube	**10.30pm**	Bette Midler
10.00pm	BBC News at Ten	**10.30pm**	Newsnight	**10.00pm**	ITV News at Ten and Weather	**12.10am**	Magic Mike	**11.30pm**	That's So 1989
10.25pm	Regional News and Weather	**11.05pm**	A Most Violent Year	**10.30pm**	ITV News London	**2.05am**	Born to Kill	**12.15am**	Super Casino
10.35pm	The Graham Norton Show	**1.00am**	Panorama	**10.45pm**	Through the Keyhole	**3.00am**	Damned	**3.10am**	GPs: Behind Closed Doors
11.25pm	The Young Offenders	**1.30am**	Animals with Cameras	**11.45pm**	Take Me Out	**3.25am**	Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny	**4.00am**	GPs: Behind Closed Doors
12.00am	Winter Olympics	**2.30am**	Food: Truth or Scare	**12.45am**	Jackpot247	**4.20am**	The Question Jury	**4.45am**	House Doctor
3.00am	Winter Olympics	**3.15am**	MasterChef	**3.00am**	Alphabetical	**5.15am**	Coast v Country	**5.10am**	Divine Designs
6.00am	Breakfast			**3.50am**	ITV Nightscreen			**5.35am**	Wildlife SOS

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Saturday February 17th

BBC 1

TOP TV

7.15pm All Together Now

MORNING

10.00am Winter Olympics

AFTERNOON

12.00pm Football Focus
1.00pm BBC News
1.15pm Winter Olympics
4.30pm Final Score
5.25pm BBC News
5.35pm Regional News and Weather
5.45pm And They're Off... for Sport Relief

EVENING

6.25pm Pointless
7.15pm All Together Now
8.20pm Casualty
9.10pm Troy: Fall of a City
10.10pm BBC News
10.30pm Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights
11.35pm Live at the Apollo
12.20am Winter Olympics
3.00am Winter Olympics
6.00am Breakfast

BBC 2

TOP TV

8.45pm Dad's Army

MORNING

10.00am Saturday Kitchen Live
11.30am The Hairy Bikers' Comfort Food

AFTERNOON

12.00pm Winter Olympics
1.15pm Escape to the Country
1.45pm Trust Me, I'm a Doctor
2.15pm The Third Man
4.00pm Flog It!
4.45pm Nigel Slater's Middle East: Turkey
5.45pm Tom Kerridge's Lose Weight for Good

EVENING

6.15pm Hugh's Wild West
7.15pm Winter Olympics
8.15pm David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities
8.45pm Dad's Army
9.15pm QI XL
10.00pm Imagine...
11.15pm Young Frankenstein
12.55am The Producers
3.00am Weather for the Week Ahead
3.05am BBC News
6.00am Winter Olympics

ITV

TOP TV

8.00pm The Voice UK

MORNING

8.30am Be Cool, Scooby-Doo
9.05am Wishfart
9.25am ITV News
9.30am Saturday Morning with James Martin
11.25am The Hungry Sailors

AFTERNOON

12.25pm ITV News
12.30pm Dancing on Ice
2.30pm Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury
3.00pm Celebrity Catchphrase
4.00pm Tipping Point
5.00pm The Chase

EVENING

6.00pm ITV News
6.20pm ITV News London
6.30pm Take Me Out
8.00pm The Voice UK
9.30pm Through the Keyhole
10.30pm ITV News
10.45pm Lethal Weapon 3
12.45am Jackpot247
3.00am Babushka
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
6.00am Sooty
6.10am The Aquabats! Super Show!
6.35am Dino Dana
6.50am Super 4

Channel 4

TOP TV

8.00pm Britain at Low Tide

MORNING

7.10am King of Queens
8.00am Everybody Loves Raymond
9.00am Frasier
10.30am The Big Bang Theory
11.00am The Big Bang Theory
11.30am The Big Bang Theory

AFTERNOON

12.00pm The Simpsons
12.30pm The Simpsons
1.00pm The Simpsons
1.30pm Come Dine with Me
2.30pm Coast v Country
3.35pm A Place in the Sun
4.35pm The Secret Life of the Zoo
5.35pm The Supervet

EVENING

6.30pm Channel 4 News
7.00pm Penelope Keith's Coastal Villages
8.00pm Britain at Low Tide
9.00pm Ted 2
11.15pm Dracula Untold
12.55am The Last Leg
1.50am Hollyoaks Omnibus
3.55am Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny
4.50am Location, Location, Location
5.45am Superfoods: The Real Story
6.15am King of Queens
6.40am King of Queens

Channel 5

TOP TV

4.05pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!

MORNING

9.35am Digby Dragon
9.50am Peppa Pig
10.05am Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
10.35am Access
10.40am Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud
11.10am Police Interceptors

AFTERNOON

12.05pm Police Interceptors
1.05pm The A-Team
2.05pm The A-Team
3.05pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
4.05pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
5.00pm Rich House, Poor House

EVENING

6.00pm The Wonderful World of Puppies
7.00pm Cruising with Jane McDonald
8.00pm Building the World's Most Luxurious Ship
8.55pm 5 News Weekend
9.00pm Football on 5
10.00pm Football on 5
10.30pm There's Something About Mary
12.40am Super Casino
3.10am GPs: Behind Closed Doors
4.00am Secrets of the National Trust with Alan Titchmarsh
4.45am House Doctor

Sunday February 18th

BBC 1

TOP TV

6.30pm Countryfile

MORNING

7.55am Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights
9.00am The Andrew Marr Show
10.00am The Big Questions
11.00am Homes Under the Hammer

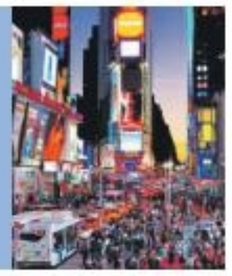
AFTERNOON

12.00pm BBC News
12.15pm Winter Olympics
3.35pm Match of the Day Live

EVENING

6.05pm BBC News
6.20pm Regional News and Weather
6.30pm Countryfile
7.30pm Hold the Sunset
8.00pm Call the Midwife
9.00pm The British Academy Film Awards 2018
11.00pm BBC News
11.20pm Regional News and Weather
11.30pm Julius Caesar Revealed
12.30am Winter Olympics
3.00am Winter Olympics
6.00am Breakfast

BBC 2



TOP TV

6.00pm New York: America's Busiest City

MORNING

9.00am Winter Olympics

AFTERNOON

12.15pm Saturday Kitchen Best Bites
1.45pm A Vicar's Life
2.15pm The Crane Gang
3.15pm South Korea: Earth's Hidden Wilderness
4.15pm Lifeline
4.25pm Songs of Praise
5.00pm Back in Time for Tea

EVENING

6.00pm New York: America's Busiest City
7.00pm Winter Olympics
8.00pm Dragons' Den
9.00pm Life and Death Row
10.00pm The Mash Report
10.30pm Live at the Apollo
11.15pm Cleverman
12.05am Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
1.50am Question Time
2.50am Holby City
3.50am Weather for the Week Ahead
3.55am BBC News
6.00am Winter Olympics

ITV

TOP TV

8.00pm Endeavour

MORNING

9.05am Wishfart
9.25am ITV News
9.30am Love Your Garden
10.00am Peston on Sunday
11.00am The Martin Lewis Money Show
11.25am The Voice UK

AFTERNOON

12.55pm ITV News
1.00pm The Harbour
1.30pm The Cruise
2.00pm What Would Your Kid Do?
3.00pm Britain's Brightest Family
3.30pm Tipping Point
4.30pm ITV News
4.45pm ITV News London
5.00pm The Chase: Celebrity Special

EVENING

6.00pm Dancing on Ice
8.00pm Endeavour
10.00pm ITV News
10.15pm Peston on Sunday
11.15pm Frustrated Britain: Caught on Camera
12.10am Car Wars
1.05am Jackpot247
3.00am Take on the Twisters
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
5.05am The Jeremy Kyle Show
6.00am Good Morning Britain

Channel 4

TOP TV

2.55pm The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water

MORNING

7.05am Everybody Loves Raymond
8.00am Frasier
8.30am Frasier
9.00am Frasier
9.30am Sunday Brunch

AFTERNOON

12.30pm Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast
1.30pm The Simpsons
2.00pm The Simpsons
2.25pm The Simpsons
2.55pm The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water
4.45pm Rio 2

EVENING

6.35pm Channel 4 News
7.00pm Posh Pawn
8.00pm The First Brit: Secrets of the 10,000 Year Old Man
9.00pm Homeland
10.15pm Our Kind of Traitor
12.20am The Supervet
1.15am The World's Most Expensive Food
2.05am Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
3.00am Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny
3.50am The Question Jury
4.40am KOTV Boxing Weekly
5.05am Coast v Country

Channel 5

TOP TV

4.45pm Something's Gotta Give

MORNING

9.35am Digby Dragon
9.50am Peppa Pig
9.55am Peppa Pig
10.00am Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
10.35am Football on 5
11.25am Football on 5

AFTERNOON

12.00pm Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud
12.30pm Justin and the Knights of Valour
2.15pm P.S. I Love You
4.45pm Something's Gotta Give
5.45pm 5 News
5.50pm Something's Gotta Give

EVENING

7.10pm 5 News Weekend
7.15pm Greatest Celebrity Wind-Ups Ever!
8.00pm Caught in the Act
9.00pm When Comedy Goes Horribly Wrong
12.00am Bette Midler
1.00am Super Casino
3.10am Cowboy Builders
4.00am The Railways That Built Britain, with Chris Tarrant
4.45am House Doctor
5.10am Divine Designs
5.35am Wildlife SOS

Monday February 19th

BBC 1

TOP TV

5.15pm Pointless

MORNING

9.15am Winter Olympics

AFTERNOON

1.00pm BBC News at One
1.30pm Regional News and Weather
1.45pm Doctors
2.15pm The Coroner
3.00pm Escape to the Country
3.45pm Get Away for Winter
4.30pm Antiques Road Trip
5.15pm Pointless

EVENING

6.00pm BBC News at Six
6.30pm Regional News and Weather
7.00pm The One Show
7.30pm Match of the Day Live
10.00pm BBC News at Ten
10.30pm Regional News and Weather
10.45pm Have I Got Old News for You
11.15pm The Graham Norton Show
12.05am Winter Olympics
3.00am Winter Olympics
6.00am Breakfast

BBC 2

8.00pm Only Connect

MORNING

9.15am Animal Park Summer Special
10.00am Homes Under the Hammer
11.00am Bargain Hunt

AFTERNOON

12.00pm The Daily Politics
1.00pm Winter Olympics

EVENING

6.00pm Eggheads
6.30pm Great British Railway Journeys
7.00pm Winter Olympics
8.00pm Only Connect
8.30pm University Challenge
9.00pm Collateral
10.00pm Two Doors Down
10.30pm Newsnight
11.15pm Horizon
12.15am Odyssey
12.55am Odyssey
1.40am Countryfile
2.35am Shane
3.35am Hugh's Wild West

ITV

9.00pm Marcella

MORNING

8.30am Lorraine
9.25am The Jeremy Kyle Show
10.30am This Morning

AFTERNOON

12.30pm Loose Women
1.30pm ITV Lunchtime News
1.55pm ITV News London
2.00pm James Martin's American Adventure
3.00pm Tenable
4.00pm Tipping Point
5.00pm The Chase

EVENING

6.00pm ITV News London
6.30pm ITV Evening News
7.00pm Emmerdale
7.30pm Coronation Street
8.00pm The Martin Lewis Money Show
8.30pm Coronation Street
9.00pm Marcella
10.00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather
10.30pm ITV News London
10.45pm Boarding Schools: The Secret Shame - Exposure
11.55pm Children Who Kill
12.45am Ross Kemp Behind Bars - Inside Barlinnie

Channel 4

8.30pm Food Unwrapped

MORNING

7.10am 3rd Rock from the Sun
7.35am Everybody Loves Raymond
8.30am Frasier
10.00am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
11.00am Undercover Boss USA

AFTERNOON

12.00pm Channel 4 News
12.05pm Couples Come Dine with Me
1.05pm Posh Pawnbrokers
2.10pm Countdown
3.00pm A Place in the Sun
4.00pm A New Life in the Sun
5.00pm Four in a Bed
5.30pm Extreme Cake Makers

EVENING

6.00pm The Simpsons
6.30pm Hollyoaks
7.00pm Channel 4 News
8.00pm Dispatches
8.30pm Food Unwrapped
9.00pm 24 Hours in Police Custody
10.00pm First Dates
11.05pm Married at First Sight
12.10am The ¬£1 Houses: Britain's Cheapest Street
1.05am The Job Interview
2.00am Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
2.55am One Born Every Minute
3.50am Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny

Channel 5

9.00pm The X Files

MORNING

8.20am Digby Dragon
8.35am Rusty Rivets
8.55am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
9.05am Mofy
9.15am The Wright Stuff
11.15am GPs: Behind Closed Doors

AFTERNOON

12.10pm 5 News Lunchtime
12.15pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
1.15pm Home and Away
1.45pm Neighbours
2.15pm Ncis: Conspiracy to Murder
3.15pm Final Recourse
5.00pm 5 News at 5
5.30pm Neighbours

EVENING

6.00pm Home and Away
6.30pm 5 News Tonight
7.00pm Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights
8.00pm The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door
9.00pm The X Files
10.00pm When Game Shows Go Horribly Wrong
1.00am Super Casino
3.10am Cowboy Builders
4.00am Cruising with Jane McDonald
4.45am House Doctor
5.10am Divine Designs

Tuesday February 20th

BBC 1

TOP TV

9.00pm Shetland

MORNING

9.15am Winter Olympics

AFTERNOON

1.00pm BBC News at One
1.30pm Regional News and Weather
1.45pm Doctors
2.15pm The Coroner
3.00pm Escape to the Country
3.45pm Get Away for Winter
4.30pm Antiques Road Trip
5.15pm Pointless

EVENING

6.00pm BBC News at Six
6.30pm Regional News and Weather
7.00pm The One Show
7.30pm EastEnders
8.00pm Holby City
9.00pm Shetland
10.00pm BBC News at Ten
10.30pm Regional News and Weather
10.45pm Plastic Surgery Capital of the World
11.45pm Winter Olympics
4.00am Winter Olympics
6.00am Breakfast

BBC 2

6.30pm Great British Railway Journeys

MORNING

9.15am Animal Park Summer Special
10.00am Homes Under the Hammer
11.00am Bargain Hunt

AFTERNOON

12.00pm The Daily Politics
1.00pm Winter Olympics

EVENING

6.00pm Eggheads
6.30pm Great British Railway Journeys
7.00pm Winter Olympics
8.00pm Back in Time for Tea
9.00pm Flatpack Empire
10.00pm Mum
10.25pm The Archiveologists
10.30pm Newsnight
11.15pm Generation Gifted
12.15am Generation Gifted
1.15am The Super League Show
2.00am The New-Builds are Coming: Battle in the Countryside
3.00am Celebrity Antiques Road Trip

ITV

7.00pm Emmerdale

MORNING

8.30am Lorraine
9.25am The Jeremy Kyle Show
10.30am This Morning

AFTERNOON

12.30pm Loose Women
1.30pm ITV Lunchtime News
1.55pm ITV News London
2.00pm James Martin's American Adventure
3.00pm Tenable
4.00pm Tipping Point
5.00pm The Chase

EVENING

6.00pm ITV News London
6.30pm ITV Evening News
7.00pm Emmerdale
7.30pm 100 Year Old Driving School
8.00pm What Would Your Kid Do?
9.00pm Benidorm: Ten Years on Holiday
10.00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather
10.30pm ITV News London
10.45pm Through the Keyhole
11.45pm Take Me Out
1.00am Jackpot247
3.00am Loose Women
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
5.05am The Jeremy Kyle Show

Channel 4

8.00pm Joe Wicks: The Body Coach

MORNING

7.10am 3rd Rock from the Sun
7.35am Everybody Loves Raymond
8.30am Frasier
10.05am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
11.00am Undercover Boss USA

AFTERNOON

12.00pm Channel 4 News
12.05pm Come Dine with Me
1.05pm Posh Pawnbrokers
2.10pm Countdown
3.00pm A Place in the Sun
4.00pm A New Life in the Sun
5.00pm Four in a Bed
5.30pm Extreme Cake Makers

EVENING

6.00pm The Simpsons
6.30pm Hollyoaks
7.00pm Channel 4 News
8.00pm Joe Wicks: The Body Coach
9.00pm 24 Hours in A and E
10.00pm Working with Weinstein
11.05pm Before We Die
12.20am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
1.10am It's a Weird World
2.05am The Supervet
3.00am The Question Jury
3.55am Coast v Country
4.50am Location, Location, Location

Channel 5

8.00pm The Dog Rescuers with Alan Davies

MORNING

8.20am Digby Dragon
8.35am Rusty Rivets
8.55am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
9.05am Mofy
9.15am The Wright Stuff
11.15am GPs: Behind Closed Doors

AFTERNOON

12.10pm 5 News Lunchtime
12.15pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
1.15pm Home and Away
1.45pm Neighbours
2.15pm Ncis: Conspiracy to Murder
3.15pm Deadly Departure
5.00pm 5 News at 5
5.30pm Neighbours

EVENING

6.00pm Home and Away
6.30pm 5 News Tonight
7.00pm World Rally Championship 2018
8.00pm The Dog Rescuers with Alan Davies
9.00pm Elizabeth: Our Queen
10.00pm Ben Fogle: Return to the Wild
11.05pm Sinkholes
12.00am Weather Terror
1.00am Super Casino
3.10am GPs: Behind Closed Doors
4.00am Cruising with Jane McDonald
4.45am House Doctor
5.10am Divine Designs

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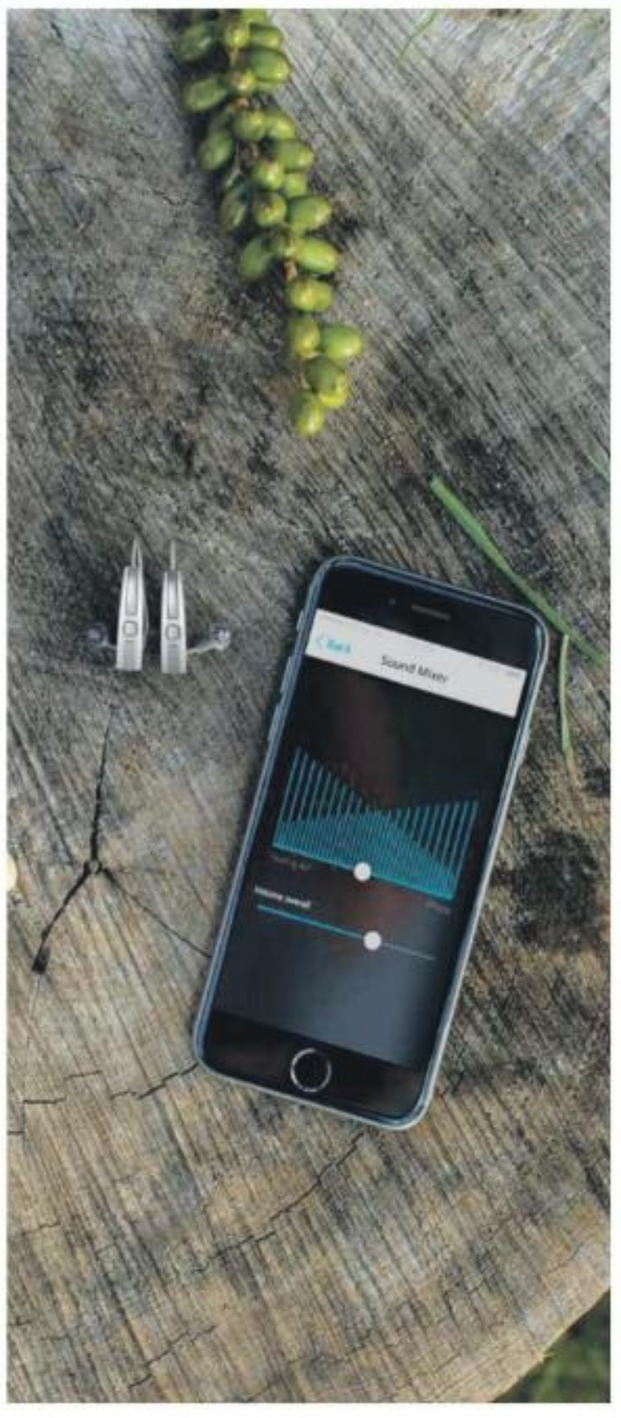

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The daily hysterical headline about house prices is misleading

Bill Cooper, co-author of The Oxford Property Blog and managing director of Martin and Co, Oxford

"Oxford house prices are stagnating" "Oxford homes least affordable in the UK" "The house price bubble is set to burst" "Housing Armageddon". Just a flavour of the typical narrative of headlines in the printed and digital media daily. Yes, it seems we Brits are completely obsessed with property, especially when the news is dire!

Given that I am in the business of writing about Oxford's property market, I thought I'd do a little research to establish some facts and to share them with you.

Hometrack has recently updated its UK Cities house price index with data to December 2017, so it is a good time to take a look and consider the facts.

In general UK citizens feel that they understand property it feels as if it is in our national DNA. And yet, so many people seem to react to short-term trends, changing their investment decisions because of the headlines they read.

According to Hometrack, an average Oxford property is now worth £425,600, at a time when an average London home is worth £488,300. So, an average Oxford property is now worth 87% of an average London property. Only Cambridge gets close to Oxford and London with an average house value of £404,300. But London prices have been falling so surely Oxford will suffer a similar fate? Well the truth is no-one knows! Towards the end of last year Oxford properties did dip slightly according to Hometrack, but across the 12 months to December 2017 Land Registry data shows Oxford properties sold for values 6% up on the previous 12 months. It is also apparent that house prices have performed better than predicted during January.

We are often told that investment in property should be long-term, but does the long-term data support that assertion? Below is an analysis that shows Oxford house prices (in Green) vs UK house prices (in Brown).

Oxford vs UK House Prices

From the graphic it can be seen that the UK house price index had a positive consistent growth curve over the period from 1998, to 2008 after which it had a steep dip during 2009/10 with a progressive recovery to the end of 2017 as which point prices had recovered to their 2007 highs. In comparison, since 1998 Oxford property has consistently out-performed the UK average, following a steeper growth curve, experiencing a more dramatic short-term fall during 2008/9, since when, it's recovery has been significantly steeper recovering 2009/10 losses during 2012/13.

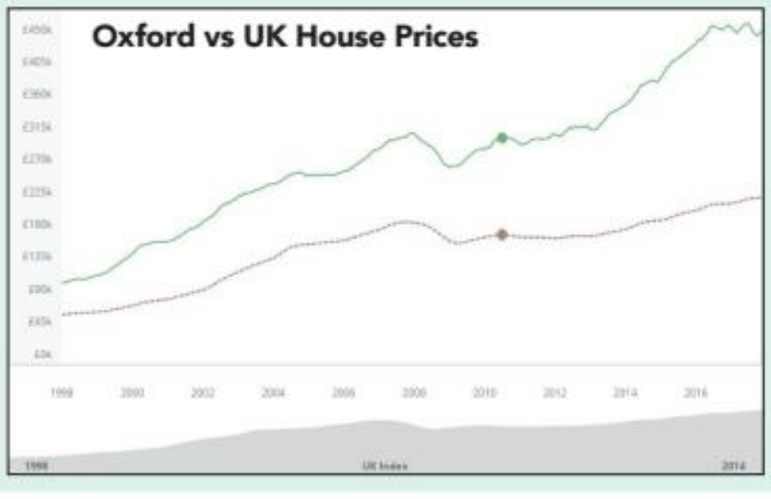
Oxford vs London House Prices

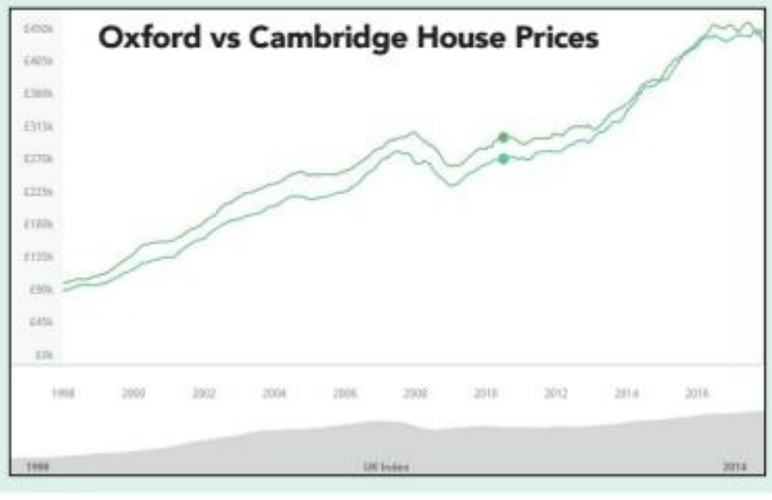
So how has Oxford done compared to London? Well the analysis above shows how closely Oxford (green) typically tracks the London market (Brown). With a gap in average values opening since 2013 as London out-performed the wider UK market because wage growth recovered more strongly and foreign investment drove the market forward.

Oxford vs Cambridge House Prices

And, let's not forget the rivalry with Cambridge. How does Oxford compare with Cambridge? The analysis below is also notable for the close tracking of Oxford (dark green) and Cambridge property (teal) prices, demonstrating that both Cities benefit from their world-renowned Universities, their proximity to London and their long-term investment in the knowledge-based services sector.

What these analyses really show is that property is a reliable long-term investment, and that property owners should not be blown off course by short-term fluctuations and alarming headlines. Even a multi-generational event like the credit crunch, which had a profound effect on property for 12 to 24 months, is now a matter of history with the long-term trend of growth having been restored.





Is it time to fall in love with a new home?

Whether or not Cupid visited you this week, it may still prove to be the right time to fall in love with a new property and market yours for sale or get it ready for new tenants!

Our data has historically shown that in the week after Valentine's Day, there's an uplift in interest in property. Simply, the day of red roses, cheesy greetings cards and romantic gestures, marks a milestone in many relationships – people decide to move in together; to move on from a rental to an owned property; they get engaged; and in some instances, they split up!

Of course, it may simply be a case that people who have been considering a move put it off over the festive period and with the passing of January – a month almost universally loathed – they put their plans in to action. Whatever the situation, it seems that Valentine's Day encourages many people to consider a new home.

Potential buyers registering in the week after Valentine's Day have increased four-fold in the last five years, and last year we saw more mortgage applications made after February 14th than in the previous week! Enquiries and registrations from people looking to rent a new home in the week after Valentine's Day has also risen year on year over the last 3 years.

A one-off peak might have signalled a blip, but having tracked this now for many years, we believe that this is a real and significant trend. That means that if you're planning to market your property for sale or have considered taking your first steps as a landlord, you'd be well advised to register with Andrews now to take advantage of the increase in property interest once Cupid has visited.

In order to ensure that your property stands out from the crowd and becomes a home that someone falls in love with, visit your local Andrews branch – there are five across Oxfordshire – to discuss your plans and arrange a valuation for your home, or visit www.andrewsonline.co.uk for advice on what to consider ahead of a move.

PROPERTY WEEKLY

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KINGS COPSE, GARSINGTON £169,950
(4 miles east Oxford city centre)

A superbly presented 2015 Tingdene Hayden Classic 28' x 16' twin unit in attractive gardens. Lounge, kitchen/diner, bedroom, en-suite shower room, metered LPG gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed windows, Decra style roof, textured walls, attractive gardens, on- site car parking space

THAMESIDE COURT, BABLOCKHYTHE £180,000
(5 miles Witney, 12 miles Oxford)

A brand new 2016 Prestige Concerto 36' x 20' twin unit on favoured private park, close to River Thames. Hall, lounge/diner, fitted kitchen, inner hall, 2 bedrooms (main bedroom with en-suite shower room), bathroom, LPG gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed windows and doors, carpets, curtains and furnishings, on-site parking, brick built skirt and steps, gardens

THE WILLOWS, GROVE £95,000
(12 miles south west of Oxford)

A 1999 Homeseeker Quantock 40' x 20' twin unit on established private park, close to village centre. Hall, small study/store area, 20' lounge/diner, kitchen, inner hall, 2 bedrooms (main bedroom with en-suite shower room), bathroom, mains gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazing, Decra style roof, low maintenance gardens, driveway, garage

SHILLINGFORD HILL,WALLINGFORD G.P £225,000
(2 miles Wallingford, 10 miles Oxford)

N.B EXAMPLE OF STYLE AVAILABLE, NOT ACTUAL HOME
A new Prestige Sofia 42' x 20' twin unit pleasantly located on sought after "Quality Awardâ park in elevated location close to the River Thames. HOME SHOULD BE SITED AND READY FOR OCCUPATION MID 2018.
Porch, hall, 20' lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, 2 good bedrooms (main bedroom with walk-in wardrobe and en-suite shower room), bathroom, LPG gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed windows and doors, Decra style roof, textured walls, brick built skirt and steps, gardens, car parking to front

SHILLINGFORD HILL, WALLINGFORD £184,000
(12 miles south Oxford)

A well presented 2003 Stately Tredegar 38' x 20' twin unit set in enclosed gardens on this sought after Thameside "Quality Award"¢ private park. Porch, hall, 20' lounge, dining area, kitchen, 2 good bedrooms (main bedroom with en-suite shower room), bathroom, oil radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed windows and doors, Decra style roof, textured walls, brick built skirt, gated on-site car parking, enclosed gardens

BICESTER PARK HOME ESTATE £150,000
(10 miles Oxford)

A circa 2000 Stately Albion 40' x 20' twin unit on enclosed pitch. Porch, hall, lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, utility room, 2 good bedrooms, shower room, LPG gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazing, on-site car parking, gardens

ST MARY'S COURT, BAMPTON £179,950
(4 miles Witney, 12 miles Oxford)

A superbly presented 2011 Tingdene Muslo Lodge 42' x 20' twin unit pleasantly situated on this established and popular private park. Porch hall, superb L-shaped lounge/diner, study, fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms (main bedroom with dressing room adjoining), luxury bathroom/shower room, LPG gas radiator central heating, wood-effect flooring throughout, UPVC double glazed Georgian style windows and doors, textured external walls, Decra style roof, brick built skirt and steps, gravelled driveway and gravelled car parking space, low maintenanc gardens

BLEWBURY, DIDCOT £145,000
(4 miles Didcot, 15 miles oxford)

A 2008 Homeseeker 32' x 20' twin unit set in low maintenance gardens with 2 on-site driveways on private park situated in the heart of this sought after village. Hall, lounge/dining room, kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, mains gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed windows and doors, coved ceilings, textured external walls, brick built skirt and steps, Decra style roof, enclosed low maintenance gardens with 2 on-site driveways, additional communal car parking nearby

THE WILLOWS, GROVE £105,000

A 1986 Tingdene 36' x 20' twin unit in need of some updating set on corner plot on established private park. Hall, 17' lounge, dining area, kitchen, 2 good bedrooms, bathroom, mains has radiator central heating, UPVC double glazing, Decra style roof, brick built skirt, low maintenance gardens, communal car parking to front

FOXHALL MANOR PARK, DIDCOT £88,500
(12 miles south Oxford)

A spacious 1976 Stateley Sceptre 36' x 20' twin unit on good sized plot. Lobby, hall, 17' lounge, 18' kitchen/diner, 3 bedrooms, bathroom, LPG gas central heating, UPVC double glazed windows, Decra style roof, brick built skirt, low maintenance gardens, on site carking for several cars

BICESTER PARK HOME ESTATE GP £185,000
(10 miles Oxford, 2 miles Bicester)

NB: EXAMPLE OF STYLE AVAILABLE, NOT ACTUAL HOME
A brand new Prestige Sonata II 38' x 20' twin unit to be sited Spring 2018 on recently established park home site, just south of Bicester town centre. Hall, lounge, dining area, fitted kitchen with vaulted ceiling, 2 good bedrooms (main bedroom with en-suite shower room and walk-in wardrobe), bathroom, furnishings, carpets, curtains, blinds, LPG gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed windows and doors, maintenance-free white UPVC fascias, barge-boards and soffits, textured walls, Decra style roof, brick built skirt and steps, garden with on-site car parking space

FOXHALL MANOR PARK, DIDCOT £99,950
(12 miles south Oxford)

A much improved early 1980s Donnington 36' x 20' twin unit on established park. Hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, 2 good bedrooms, bathroom, separate WC, metered LPG gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed replacement windows, Decra style roof, low maintenance gardens, car parking space to side.

SANDFORD ON THAMES £84,000
(3 miles Oxford centre)

A much improved and well-extended 1970's Donnington 43' x 10' single unit backing onto fields. Hall, lounge, kitchen/diner, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, LPG gas radiator central heating, UPVC double glazed replacement windows, Decra style roof, gardens, on-site car parking space

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(Deuteronomy 31:6)

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Lindsay Drive, Peachcroft £275,000
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Abingdon £250,000
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£425,000
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Abingdon £400,000
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Abingdon £239,950
One bed ground floor apartment in the popular Quakers Court development. 0.2 miles from Abingdon marketplace. EPC Rating - C

Fyfield £895,000
Nestled in the heart of this picturesque Oxfordshire village, is this exquisite double fronted, five bedroom detached cottage. EPC Rating D

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Mazda CX-5 – 2.2 150ps SE-L Nav SKYACTIV -D 2WD

Full of love for 'frankly staggering' Mazda

By **Tony Yates**

FOR this week's road test, I am in the brilliant Mazda CX-5. And for reasons I can't explain, I'm going to come right out and say it. 'I love it'.

Yes I know I seem to be saying this a lot lately, but it's true. Or maybe it's my age showing here, which might not be a good thing. Anyway, the facts are the Mazda CX-5 is a decent car with plenty to offer.

Honestly, what Mazda has done here is produce a quality product for the right amount of money without skimping on quality or equipment – plus it has pretty much everything you will ever need.

I mean, look at the MX-5 as the perfect example; it's still one of the best 2-seater sports cars you can buy for around the same price as a decent family hatchback.

So once more just for the record, the Mazda CX-5 is a 'frankly staggering' machine, and one of the main reasons why I told my own mother to buy one, which, is exactly what she did.

Power & efficiency

Under the bonnet, you will find a 2.2-litre Turbo-diesel, four-cylinder in line, DOHC 16 valve engine that has 150ps at 4,500rpm and 380Nm of torque. Add in a 0-62 time of just over nine seconds and a top speed of around 127mph. You must also be thinking I bet its thirsty with that big 2.2-litre engine. Actually, you won't need to visit the pumps any sooner than a normal hatchback – because the CX-5 can easily achieve 55mpg on the combined cycle.

On the road

The CX-5 feels planted and handles brilliantly into the corners. The steering is also very accurate and gives you great feedback - while the suspension also manages to soak up all the bumps and potholes with ease.

There was also very little body roll which was yet another sign of the chassis doing an excellent job of keeping everything under control. I think the CX-5 is a proper peach to drive, not only because it feels fun to drive, but also because it feels like Mazda really has put some thought into how it performs, which is always the most important part.

Design & technology

Some of the standard features you will find come in the form of; 17" alloy wheels, LED headlights including LED daytime running lights, LED front fog lights, adaptive front lighting system, dusk-sensing lights, heated, auto power-folding door mirrors, front and rear parking sensors, Black cloth seat trim, driver and front passenger seat height adjustment, rear seat recline, leather-wrapped steering wheel, 40/20/40 fold flat rear seats, electronic parking brake, rain-sensing front wipers, cruise control, front and rear electric windows, dual-zone climate control air-conditioning, engine start / stop button, 7" Colour touch-screen display and multimedia commander and a AM / FM / DAB radio with 6 speakers.

Plus; Integrated navigation system with 3-years free European map updates, advanced Smart City Brake Support, driver and passenger front, side and curtain airbags, Dynamic Stability Control and Traction Control System, Hill Hold assist and ISOFIX child seat anchorages.

To sum up

The CX-5 really is a brilliant car which also happens to be one of the best looking too. Mazda really has done a fantastic job here and the CX-5 is now well above any of its rivals and the only compact SUV you need to be thinking about looking at.

Price: £25,695 (from)

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13 63 DACIA DUSTER AMBIANCE 1.5 DCI 5DR, met silver, front e/windows, PAS, radio/cd, remote locking, roof rails, SH, 56K..... **£5,995**

12 12 RENAULT SCENIC 1.5 DYNAMIQUE TOMTOM 5DR DIESEL, met brown with black half leather, SH, 1 owner, 103k **£5,495**

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Model Shown: Civic EX 1.6 i-DTEC Manual in Rallye Red at £24,925 On The Road (OTR). Terms and Conditions: New retail Civic i-DTEC ordered from 01 February 2018 to 31 March 2018 and registered by 31 March 2018. Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. Not to be used along with any other offers currently available. Johnsons Cars Ltd (Firm Reference Number: 512460) are an Appointed Representative of ITC Compliance Ltd, and are authorised & regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (their registration number is 313486) and are permitted to advise on and arrange General Insurance contracts. Registered Name: Johnsons Cars Ltd, Registered Office: Johnsons Cars Ltd, Empire Court, Albert Street, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 4DA. Registration No. 3716766. VAT Registration No. GB927551606.

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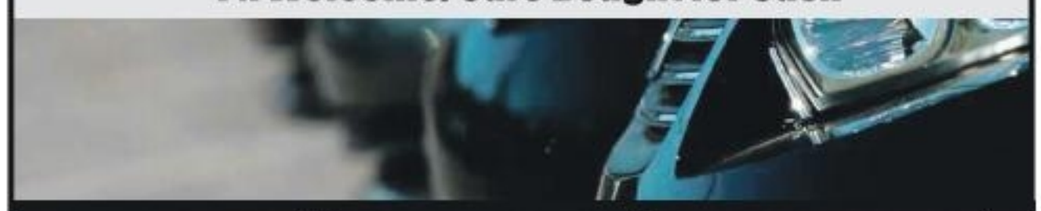

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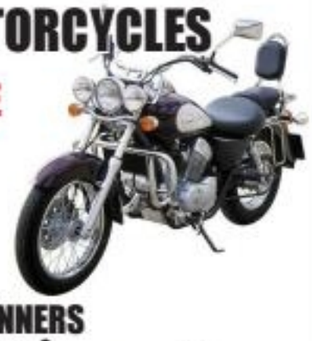

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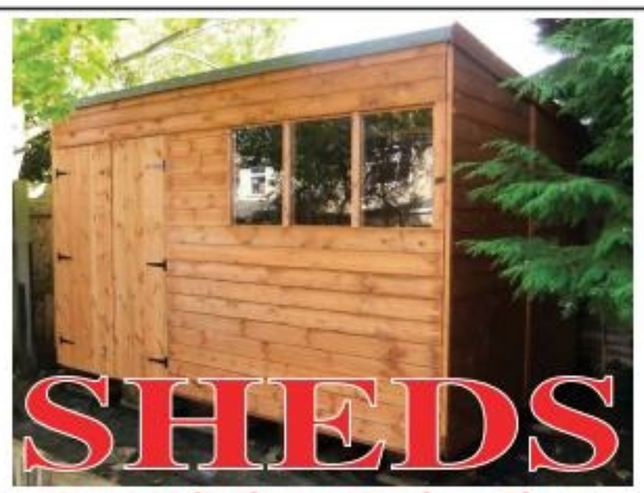

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VICTORIA, elegant smart black lady. 42yrs, loves life, gsoh, sexy in a sophisticated way. Looking to meet a chap of any age, must have GSOH. **Text Only. Box: 408460**

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JAMIMA, attractive, smart intelligent lady. 43yrs, brunette with striking green eyes. Hoping to meet a mature gent of older years. **Text Only. Box: 4036001**

PAULINE, mature lady, well dressed and petite. Passionate about many things. Hoping to find a gent to share life's experiences. Friends at first then lets see how things work out. Pls text me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429977**

SUSANNA, 42yrs, very attractive well groomed married lady. Works in London, can travel anywhere but cannot accommodate. If you are willing to meet on those terms contact me. **Text Only. Box: 4038007**

MATURE, professional, adventurous lady. Attractive and Sporty, very slim and active. Hoping to meet a chap for dining out, supper at mine, all sorts of things. You must have a GSOH. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429969**

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MONICA, strict german lady, 32yrs, wanting to meet a submissive, easygoing gent of any age. South East/London only pls. **Text Only. Box: 4079865**

LINDA, late 50s, very attractive, looking for naughty no strings times. Call or text me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429973**

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ANNA, 53yrs, attractive blonde lady, with lovely curves. Seeking man any age for no strings discreet fun. **Tel: 0906 515 3043 Box: 429721**

SANDRA, friendly lady, attractive & kind. Hoping to meet similar minded gent for outings, perhaps more. ACA/Text answered. Hope to hear from you. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429967**

AMANDA, 36yrs, attractive lady. Solvent and well educated and spoken. Feminine figure with large breasts. Hoping to meet a broadminded gent, any age for discreet relationship. I don't mind if you are married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3035 Box: 429287**

LOVING tactile female, no ties, would love to meet a fun loving, mature male. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429907**

ANGELA, 48yrs, seeks no strings casual fun. I have my own house, car and am solvent. I'm busty with a firm figure. You must be open minded, age/status unimportant. **Tel: 0906 515 3015 Box: 427633**

SUE, loving fun caring 36yr old tactile female with many likes and interests, looking for tactile, fun male to enjoy loving relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429905**

MARIELLE, 45yrs, curvy attractive lady, likes older men. I'm married so you must be discreet. Lets meet up, and make each other smile again. Call me and lets get to know each other. **Tel: 0906 515 3039 Box: 426853**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673**

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MALE, white, single, 56 WLTM woman, any age, looks unimportant, Can't accommodate. Have walking problems. **Text only replies. Box no: 4531625**

IAN, 65, 5ft6, blue/grey eyes, looking for a LTR with a nice lady of similar age, so please get in touch and call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429841**

SINGLE male, 6ft, blue eyes looking for fun maybe more. Lets meet up and have some fun. **Text only replies. Box no: 4359515**

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MALE, age 73, wishes to meet lady for friendship. Age doesn't matter. Likes travel and photography. **Text only replies. Mailbox: 5544101**

MALE, 60s, 5ft6, widower, looking for a soul mate and to love again. So if you're looking for someone to love and to be loved, I'm your guy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429231**

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IAN, 65, 5ft6, widower, looking for a soul mate and to love again. So if you're looking for someone to love and to be loved, I'm your guy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429231**

HI my name is Roy, I'm 5ft6, blue eyes, living in Newbury, looking for a lady between 50-75. I'm just lonely and looking for a relationship so give me a ring please. **Tel No: 0906 500 3686 Box No: 429111**

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More to improve despite second place for Oxford skier

Skiing

OXFORD skiing sensation Jack Cunningham continued his impressive rise in the winter sports world on Monday with a second-place finish in the English Alpine Championships Super-G.

The 15-year-old was competing at Under-16 level at the Championships, taking place in Bormio, Italy.

Cunningham has previously won titles in the same event at Under-14 level.

The 22nd edition of the Championships feature the next generation of English alpine stars in the same month that Team GB take to the slopes at the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang.

Cunningham said: "I've been pretty disappointed the last few days with my skiing.

"It hasn't been where it is normally which is a bit annoying but I guess there's plenty of things to take from it.

"I'm happy to be on the podium but there's still a lot more to improve on."

Cunningham, who races for Team Evolution, finished with a time of 48.98 seconds in the event, sponsored by Rossignol, and was beaten by teammate Robert Holmes who took first.

Fellow Oxford youngster Adrian Yung, who finished 11th in the Under-14s, will join Cunningham in Thursday's giant slalom.

■ **Inspired by performances at the 2018 English Alpine Championships and PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Games? Find out more on Snowsport England's national grassroots participation campaign at www.goskigoboard.org.uk**

Oxfordshire skier Jack Cunningham in action at the English Alpine Championships Super-G in Italy Picture: *Racer Ready*

Can't wait to get started

Motorsport

BANBURY-BASED motorsport team Manor LMP1 have announced their drivers for the 2018/19 superseason.

Oliver Rowland, 25, and Charlie Robertson, 21, were revealed as the pair to represent Manor in the FIA World Endurance Championships, including two Le Mans 24 Hours races.

Rowland, from Sheffield, finished third in last year's Formula 2 standings and was the first to be named for the endurance racing team ahead of the upcoming 14-month long WEC season.

Both drivers will race in the Ginetta-Mecachrome G60-LT-P1 under the CEFC TRSM Racing banner.

Rowland said he was "delighted" to drive for the Oxfordshire team and "can't wait to get started".

He added: "Endurance racing is a new experience for me and it will create a fresh challenge, but I am really looking forward to working with the team and driving such an amazing car.

"Competing in the 24 hours of Le Mans is extremely exciting and it's something that I've always wanted to race in."

The young driver previously won the 2011 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award and is a '15 Formula Renault 3.5 champion.

The superseason will start at Spa-Francorchamps in May and conclude with the prestigious Le Mans race in June next year.

Fire extinguished by a returning fans' favourite as Stars win again

Ice Hockey

TABLE-TOPPERS Oxford City Stars received a major boost as the returning Darren Elliot enjoyed an impactful return to the ice.

The influential forward scored the last goal and set up another in an 8-1 home thrashing of Cardiff Fire on Sunday.

Elliot damaged his knee during Oxford's win at Peterborough Phantoms at the end of November.

But the fans' favourite made a goalscoring return when he fired home seven minutes from time to round off City's fourth successive win. He also provided the assist for Michael Whillock to make it 4-0 at the start of the second period.

That goal followed a trio of strikes in the first session from Andrew Cox (9 minutes), Joe Edwards (10) and Conor Redmond (19).

With Cardiff Fire's second division side languishing near the bottom of the league table the Stars were expected to win this game easily, and were confident enough to rotate netminders as Mark Duffy played for the first time in almost two months.

Unsurprisingly most of the action was at the other end as Kamil Kinkor built on Whillock's goal by making it 5-0, slotting home from Matthew Lawday and Jake Florey assists.

Robert Sedlak grabbed Cardiff's consolation on 36 minutes but Kinkor broke away two minutes later to make it 6-1 at the end of the second phase.

Lawday made it seven on 49 minutes before Elliot rounded off the comfortable win four minutes later.

Title rivals Solent Devils also beat Cardiff, winning 8-2 in south Wales on Saturday.

The wins mean Oxford cling on to their position at the top of the South2 table, a point ahead of the Devils having played a game more. Bracknell Hornets, who linger threateningly six points behind Oxford with four games in hand, had the weekend off.

City travel to winless Lee Valley Lions and the Devils play away at Haringey Huskies (8th) on Saturday. Bracknell also face an away game when they visit Bristol Pitbulls (9th) on Sunday.

Bright finish on a miserable day

Rugby

WITNEY thrashed Chinnor II 17-0 on a cold and wet Saturday afternoon at the Kingsey Road ground to progress to the final of the Oxfordshire Cup.

Victory over Chinnor makes it six successive wins in league and cup for the west Oxfordshire club.

The home side were dominant in the opening 30 minutes as a frustrated Witney struggled to get a foothold on the slightly sloping pitch.

The referee spoke to captain and scrum half Gareth Campbell about his team's repeated offences on 17 minutes before Witney centre Charlie Marshall was shown a yellow card three minutes later.

Chinnor edged close to Witney's try line shortly before the half hour mark before being penalised and the tide gradually turned in the away side's favour.

Fly half Jack Birks crossed the line close to the posts four minutes into extra time with full back Arron Lambourne converting to put Witney 7-0 up at the break.

Lloyd Allan touched down on 60 minutes before Campbell's up-and-under eventually found its way to centre Carl Strutt who completed the 17-0 score line 10 minutes later.

Witney will face Banbury in the county cup final at Iffley Road on March 29 and return to league action on Saturday with an away trip to Swindon.

Wimbledon serve up a comprehensive victory over Henley

Rugby

HENLEY Hawks succumbed 19-0 to a struggling Wimbledon side during a lacklustre rain sodden Saturday afternoon in the National League 2 South.

The visitors took the lead early on as Henley struggled to cope with the committed Wimbledon performance.

After a finely poised opening period, the deadlock was broken when fullback Matt Gilbert converted on 15 minutes to put the away side in front.

Daniel Laventure extended the lead shortly afterwards crossing the line with Henley's prop Brad Cook in the sin bin.

Henley currently sit nine places above Wimbledon in the league table but there was no gulf in class on the pitch as the second half got under way.

After Cook suffered a head injury, Hawks were left with 14 men on the field and had to resort to uncontested scrums.

The contest was all but ended when Ben Brooks put Wimbledon even further out of reach on 60 minutes to cap a fine display to move the away side a little closer to league safety.

Wimbledon's Dylan Flashman was named the man of the match in front of the 210-strong crowd at the Dry Leas ground.

The result means Henley stay sixth on 62 points ahead of Saturday's away trip to Redruth in Cornwall.

Henley Hawks struggled on the rain soaked Dry Leas pitch against a dominant Wimbledon. Picture: *Steve Karpa*

Sport

Hoops scoop valuable points

By George Welch

Oxford City

Debutant Sam Nombe scored City's fourth to secure the points in a good victory
Picture: *Michael Allen*

THE pressure was lifted off the shoulders of boss Mark Jones as Oxford City won just their second game in 2018.

The Hoops humbled promotion chasing Hemel Hempstead 4-1 at Court Place Farm on Saturday.

A Freddie Grant goal meant City were already a goal to the good before Hemel keeper Laurie Walker was sent off for rushing out too quickly and handling the ball outside the area on 20 minutes.

It took just four minutes for relegation threatened Oxford to take advantage as Christian Oxlade-Chamberlain bundled home.

Late goals from Godfrey Poku and debutant Sam Nombe secured City's biggest win of the season since the 3-0 at Whitehawk in August.

"It's a really good win for us", a relieved Jones said. "We came into the game under a little bit of pressure as we haven't started the year very well.

"Hemel are flying high in the table and it's a big win. We played well and I think we deserved it.

"We had a bit of good fortune when the keeper was sent off but I think we managed the game quite well."

He added that he was pleased with the "really, really good" debuts of new signings defender Frankie Musonda and forward Sam Nombe, who joined the club on loan from Luton Town and Milton Keynes Dons respectively last week.

The win halted a disappointing run of four defeats in five matches, edging them away from the National League South trapdoor.

Jones challenged his players to build on the win and find some consistency. Next up is a long trip to Truro City on Saturday.

He said: "What we have to do now is take it on to the next game. We need to show some consistency and go to Truro and reproduce a similar type of performance."

Truro are another play-off chasing side, promising another difficult fixture for Jones' men.

But the Cornwall side go into the game on the back of a 3-1 home defeat to mid-table Wealdstone.

The Hoops are 17th on 32 points from 30 games, three places and four points above the relegation zone.

Vanarama National League South
Saturday 10 February
Oxford City 4-1 Hemel Hempstead Town

Evo-Stik South Premier
Saturday 10 February
Slough Town 0-1 **Banbury United**

Evo-Stik South East
Saturday 10 February
Thame United P-P Hanwell Town
Tuesday 13 February
Moneyfields P-P **Thame United**

Evo-Stik South West
Saturday 10 February
North Leigh P-P AFC Totton
Slimbridge P-P **Kidlington**
Winchester City 2-0 **Didcot Town**
Tuesday 13 February
North Leigh P-P Paulton Rovers
Wednesday 14 February
Kidlington v Bideford (match after going to press)

Uhlsport Hellenic League Premier Division
Saturday 10 February
Abingdon United 3-1 Longlevens
Burnham P-P **Oxford City Nomads**

Playing well altogether nets result for Puritans

Mike Ford was pleased with the performance on Saturday

Banbury United

BANBURY United saw off promotion chasers Slough Town with an impressive 1-0 away win in Berkshire on Saturday as more new faces join the depleted squad.

A disciplined Puritans performance in defence allowed Ricky Johnson to snatch a second half goal to move Banbury to within one point of Slough in the Evo-Stik South Premier and keep their playoff hopes alive.

Defeat for the home team drops them out of the top five and one place above Banbury who are biting at their heels in eighth on 53 points.

Banbury were forced to play in an unfamiliar purple shirt after a misunderstanding over kit colours meant the visitors had to wear Slough's old away tops.

Both sides cancelled each other out in the opening half before Johnson broke the deadlock on 66 minutes capitalising on a defensive slip from Guy Hollis.

The lively forward confidently finished past Jack Turner in the Slough goal to put the Oxfordshire club in front, who restricted Slough to pot shots and dead ball situations.

Manager Mike Ford said: "Every single one of those players has played fantastically well in some games, but we haven't played well altogether in one game, and that's what we did today.

"I'm just really pleased because we've had a week where I've let a really good player go, I brought in a player [Leon Lobjoit] who in my eyes is slightly different, but he's unfortunately broken his arm and is out for six to eight weeks."

Lobjoit, 23, joined the club on loan from Northampton Town until the end of the season but broke his arm in training on Thursday last week.

He joins 18-year-old left footed defender Ross McMahon on work experience from Coventry City and former Oxford City and Oman side Fanja SC forward Amer Awadh, 20, after being given international clearance.

Last week, Banbury released striker Conor McDonagh, who registered 31 goals in 84 appearances for the club.

Banbury travel to leaders King's Lynn Town on Saturday.

Chances missed as Railwaymen come off the tracks

Didcot Town

TEN-MAN Didcot Town were left rueing missed chances as they lost 2-0 at Winchester City on Saturday.

The Railwaymen dominated possession but were unable to convert a number of opportunities.

On a pitch that cut up badly, Diddy's George Jeacock had the game's first big chance, firing into the side-netting when he could have crossed.

Winchester's Ryan Pryce then denied the away side with good saves from Matty Woodley and Cameron McNeill.

A Stuart Cattell header hit the bar and Felipe Barcelos could only head the rebound over.

Frustrated they weren't ahead at the break, Town fell behind to a freak goal three minutes after the restart when Jamie Barron launched an effort from 50 yards which looped over Leigh Bedwell.

The big moment of the match came when Didcot thought they should have had a penalty but, protests waved away, the hosts went down the other end and won a penalty of their own.

Cattell received his second yellow card for the foul and Barron duly converted the penalty.

Winchester only had a man advantage for five minutes as Adam Brice was also sent off but City hung on for victory.

The defeat leaves Diddy clinging on to sixth place, the final Evo-Stik South West play-off position.

■ Thame United v Hanwell Town, North Leigh v AFC Totton and Slimbridge v Kidlington were all postponed on Saturday.

Moneyfields v Thame United and North Leigh v Paulton Rovers were postponed on Tuesday.

As we went to press yesterday Kidlington's game at home to Bideford was on.

Felipe Barcelos missed a chance on a frustrating afternoon
Picture: *Roger Neal*

Abingdon give tough lesson in second half

Hellenic round-up

A SUPERB second half shift from Steve Alman's Abingdon United helped them come from behind to beat Longlevens 3-1.

All three United goals came in the second half and the home win helped the Vale side elbow their way into the top half of the Hellenic Premier League.

Adam Phillips put Longlevens ahead with a ninth minute strike – and that is how it stayed for more than 50 minutes.

Jayce Olivero levelled the scores at the Northcourt dead on the hour before John Dennis continued the momentum with a brace. His first came on 75 minutes, his second hitting the back of the net on 90 minutes.

PE teacher Alman praised the "important" win, adding: "Dictated the game, dominated with chances, importantly though, players stuck to the plan and got the rewards their efforts deserved."

United's win made it back-to-back wins for February – they will try and make it three from three when they pay a visit to Lydney Town on Saturday.

Oxford City Nomads' game at Burnham was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch while Wantage Town did not have a game.

As a result of their weekend off, the Freds fell further behind the two pacesetters as both Thatcham Town and Highworth Town won.

Town (3rd) host Fairford Town (17th) and Nomads (13th) entertain Tuffley Rovers (12th) on Saturday.

Explosive start fizzles out as Gas blast brace

By George Welch

Oxford United 1

Joe Rothwell 2

Bristol Rovers 2

Kyle Bennett 68, Ellis Harrison 80

Attendance: 8,471 (1,804 away)

Joe Rothwell fires United into an early lead but they couldn't keep up the pace. Pictures: *Steve Daniels*

A LACKLUSTRE second half showing from Oxford United threw away an early lead as Bristol Rovers struck twice in the second period to condemn Derek Fazackerley to a 2-1 defeat in his first home game in charge.

United started well and took the lead within two minutes through Joe Rothwell, but a poor second half from the U's saw the Gas turn the game around with a confident showing.

Caretaker boss Fazackerley called on his players to build on the previous win at Charlton Athletic – and he got an immediate response as the Yellows exploded into action.

A poor clearance from Rovers stopper Adam Smith found its way to Rothwell who took advantage and fired confidently into the top corner of the net.

The United players said the buzz around the club had returned and the hosts played with drive and passion in the early stages, although Simon Eastwood had to be alert to tip a Chris Lines effort over the bar.

Rothwell and Isaac Buckley-Ricketts both went close but Rovers saw more of the ball as the half went on.

Lacking firepower since Billy Bodin, the scorer of 11 Rovers goals this season, left for the Championship last month, the visitors only really tried their luck from range in the first half.

Kyle Bennett and Stuart Sinclair skewed high and wide before Ollie Clarke had similar luck with strikes from outside the area as the first half came to a close.

The U's had plenty to do in the second half to hold on to their lead and they were given a fright when former United midfielder Liam Sercombe, the scorer of 17 goals in two seasons in Oxford colours, flashed a header wide.

The Gas continued to ask questions as striker Ellis Harrison who, quiet up to the hour mark, should have done better with a header from close range.

But the pressure proved too much and, on 68 minutes, Bennett smashed home the equaliser when Oxford failed to clear a free kick.

Rattled, the wave of pressure intensified and Eastwood had to be at full stretch to tip a curling Bennett effort from around the post.

The winner arrived 10 minutes from time when a Clarke cross was volleyed home by Harrison.

Substitute Agon Mehmeti responded with a low drive that flashed wide but United failed to keep the ball or create anything of note in the second half, leaving plenty for Fazackerley to think about.

'Performance just wasn't good enough'

A FRUSTRATED Derek Fazackerley bemoaned a lack of composure for Oxford United's second half capitulation against Bristol Rovers.

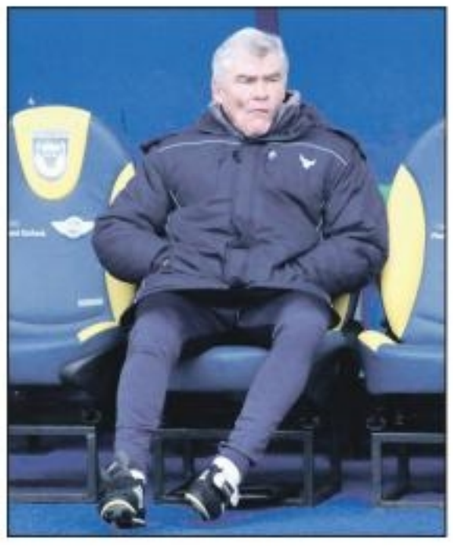
The temporary boss said his players struggled to effectively keep hold of possession while coping with the Gashead's directness.

Unhappy with the overall performance, the 66-year-old said: "We made a good start to the game but ultimately the performance wasn't good enough to justify us getting anything from the game.

"With the start that we got I would have anticipated us to show a little bit more composure.

"Bristol Rovers are a very difficult team to play against and we were defending for long periods and inevitably it gives the opposition the opportunity to get the ball in and around the box and they nicked a couple of goals."

The former defender, who has lost three and won one of his four games in charge, said he would still be unhappy with the performance even if the U's had won.



Derek Fazackerley at Saturday's game

He said: "After the good start I don't know whether our mentality was that we [the players] might be able to hold onto a 1-0 win.

"Last week we talked about performance and in the performance it got us the opportunity to stay in the game and snatch a late winner but our performance today [Saturday] wasn't good enough irrespective of the result.

"Even if we'd won 1-0 we would have been hugely disappointed with the performance because that's what drives the results."

Fazackerley added that some of the players are struggling to deal with the added tension around the Kassam.

He said: "There's a little bit of nervousness and edginess about the place at the moment, especially when playing here, and the crowd become edgy if you're not playing the type of football they expect.

"That has certainly impacted one or two of the players. We have to be better."

■ Meanwhile, the club is yet to comment on Pep Clotet's successor. It has now been more than three weeks since the Spaniard was sacked and it remains unclear who will replace him.

As we went to press Craig Bellamy, who missed out on the Wales job last month, is the bookies' favourite. David Unsworth is the latest to rule himself out, meaning Alan Stubbs, another ex-Everton defender, is second favourite.

Goalkeeper Claire Skinner and striker Chloe Chivers are off to play in the Cyprus Cup for Wales. Pictures: *OUFCW*

Ladies head off to Cyprus

OUFCW

GOALKEEPER Claire Skinner and striker Chloe Chivers have been called up to the Welsh Women's squad for the Cyprus Cup.

Manager Jayne Ludlow named the Oxford United Ladies pair ahead of the tournament opener against Finland on February 28.

Wales have been placed in Group A alongside Finland, Italy and Switzerland, and will be keen to improve on last year's sixth place finish.

Skinner has played two games for Oxford so far this season while Chivers is the club's second top goalscorer with three goals from 12 appearances.

The call-ups came after the U's lost their fourth game of the WSL2 season.

Having got back to winning ways against Aston Villa the previous week, United were unable to build on this and lost 2-1 at Tottenham Hotspur Ladies on Sunday.

Chivers justified her Wales call up with the opener midway through the first half, heading an Ellis Hillman cross over the keeper and into the net.

The Yellows held on to the lead until hail and snow made a guest appearance and an Oxford player handled in the box.

Stopper Demi Lambourne saved the spot kick only for Coral-Jade Haines to convert the rebound on 68 minutes.

And Spurs secured the points 10 minutes later when Ryah Vyse prodded home a Bianca Baptiste cross.

Oxford remain fifth, a point and a place above Tottenham, on 11 points from nine games.

They travel to Brighton & Hove Albion (3rd) on Thursday next week.

SkyBet League 1		GP	GD	PTS
1	Shrewsbury Town	31	18	64
2	Wigan Athletic	30	38	63
3	Blackburn Rovers	32	26	63
4	Rotherham United	32	17	56
5	Scunthorpe United	33	12	55
6	Bradford City	33	-2	50
7	Charlton Athletic	31	3	48
8	Plymouth Argyle	33	-1	47
9	Portsmouth	32	1	46
10	Peterborough United	31	8	45
11	Bristol Rovers	32	-2	45
12	Gillingham	32	1	44
13	Oxford United	32	-1	41
14	Southend United	32	-11	41
15	Walsall	31	-3	40
16	Doncaster Rovers	33	-3	39
17	Blackpool	32	-4	38
18	Fleetwood Town	31	-7	36
19	Oldham Athletic	33	-12	36
20	Northampton Town	33	-22	36
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More sport inside: Ice Hockey: Fans' favourite returns to score | City: Hoops impressive win | Skiing: Podium place for youngster in Italy

U's left with mountain to climb after falling to 13th

By George Welch

Rotherham United 3

Anthony Forde 7, Richard Towell 29, Michael Smith 52

Oxford United 1

James Henry 43

Attendance: 7,707 (360 away)

IRRESISTIBLE Rotherham United proved too strong for struggling Oxford United, who slipped into the bottom half of the table for the first time since October following defeat in South Yorkshire.

The timid U's were outgunned 3-1 by the Millers at the New York Stadium, a result that cost United a fifth defeat in six matches.

James Henry scored a fine solo goal on the stroke of half time – a rare positive in another loss – but the visitors were already two goals down by this point.

Caretaker manager Derek Fazackerley said his side need to stop shooting themselves in the foot but Rotherham top the SkyBet League One form table so it was no surprise they started strongly.

The hosts had already threatened twice by the time Anthony Forde smashed the ball past Simon Eastwood from 20 yards for a well-taken opener within 10 minutes.

It should have been two not long after but Eastwood, marking his 100th start for United, produced one of the finest saves of his career, tipping a Michael Smith header from six yards onto the post.

Paul Warne's side did not have to wait much longer for the second goal though as Richard Towell racked up his third goal of the season from close range on the half hour mark.

James Henry, who scored United's only goal, drives a shot at goal. Picture: *Steve Daniels*

Henry drifted past a defender and fired a wonderful effort into the roof of the net to pull a goal back for the U's. Remarkably, the winger could have levelled things in injury time had it not been for a fine save from Marek Rodak.

Any recovery was nipped in the bud when Rotherham made it 3-1 shortly after the restart, Smith opening up the two-goal home advantage again with a tap in.

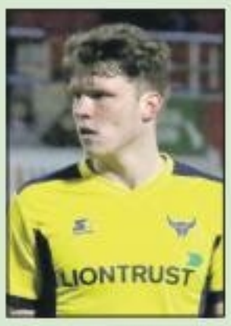
The result made it five wins on the bounce for Rotherham who stretched their unbeaten run to 12 games.

Afterwards, a disappointed Fazackerley said he was encouraged with the hunger and desire of the players to get back into the game but added: "We can't keep shooting ourselves in the foot like that – it leaves you with a mountain to climb."

Oxford are 13th while Saturday's visitors to the Kassam Plymouth Argyle, bottom of the table in October, have climbed to eighth, only three points off the play-offs.

Putting hard work in on training pitch

DEBUTANT Rob Dickie, *pictured*, admitted there were mixed feelings after finally making his first Oxford United appearance in the 3-1 defeat at Rotherham United on Tuesday.



The centre back, who signed from Reading at the start of January, did well on his United debut, winning plenty in the air and making several important interceptions on the deck.

The 21-year-old spent the first seven games of his United career on the bench but replaced Aaron Martin in the starting line-up against the Millers.

The tall centre half said: "I'm pleased to make my debut but it was a disappointing night against a good Rotherham side that have a really good understanding of their game plan."

Dickie enjoyed a combative debut against the 6ft 4in striker Michael Smith, who got the better of his marker to score Rotherham's third goal.

"I will always relish a challenge like that and after the game I will always shake his hand – it's a man's game," he said.

Dickie will have easier games but admitted that Oxford could have got something from the visit to South Yorkshire.

He said: "We had our chances and we had a few good spells in the game where we looked promising.

"We just need to cut out the goals that we're conceding and we'll work our hardest on the training pitch to do that."

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